

JAMMING!

N 9 11

THE SHOUT

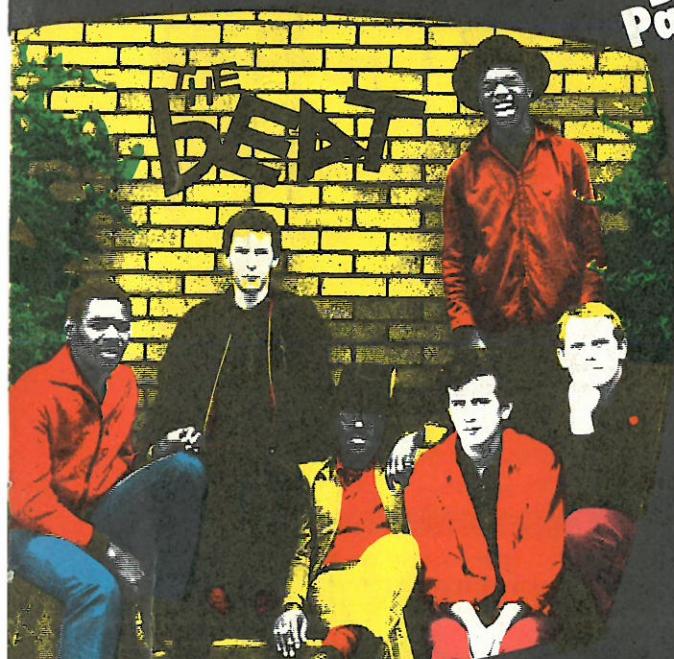


ANOTHER PRETTY FACE
ADAM & THE ANTS
BUZZCOCKS

JAM

DAMNED · SECTOR 27 · THE FALL
SPEC RECORDS

Swiss
Brum
Pages



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C C C C C

zeitgeist



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JAMMING... THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND

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Anyone knowing of shops willing to stock Jamming! get in touch.

As ever, more votes needed, though there's plenty enough coming in to make this an accurate chart. Top 10 singles and LPs of the moment please, and if you're fed up with regularly seeing the Jam & Joy Division⁺ taking the charts, then why don't you vote & change it? No photos this time, 'cos it would look stupid with the same groins everywhere + me.

SINGLES

jamming charts

Well, 4 months is better than 10 months isn't it? Jamming's back again, but this time CHAPFER; oh yeah, and smaller. 25p for 32 pages is still a good price, you'll all agree. This issue may not be as big as the last one, but hopefully the stuff in it is even better; ie a lot of research/care has gone into the articles, so it should be a lot more interesting. It's also a bit tidier, as the last issue was thrown together layout-wise, but as for Sounds calling us 'totally atrocious' lay-out; well, they can guess what I think.

Get in touch.

111 **ANONYMOUS FAN**: Last issue I made a strong point about Jamming not providing any income, and coming out when we feel like it. Well... since no. 10 I've left school, and am now putting most of my time into doing Jamming, among other things. Not surprisingly, it is therefore providing part of my income - cries of 'Sell out! Capitalist pig!' all over the place, I know; but I felt Jamming had the capability to become an even better fanzine and I needed time to organise & run it. As it was making money anyway, it seemed the right thing to do to make this full time. For the people who think this is just an opportunist money-making situation, it's rather like groups such as the Au Pairs getting £15 a week wages from the group, but being full-time. Are they sell outs? Or should they get jobs so that their music is their honest emotions, without money involved? Anyway, as said - it's only a small part of the income, and other things should evolve (eg the much-discussed record label). I wouldn't need to say all this unless I'd said the opposite last time, but honesty's a virtue...

Received too late to write about in detail, but maybe in the future: The Stuff tapes (see p.29) & an excellent tape of Scottish bands

END RESULT & FINAL PROGRAM.

Well, 4 months is better than 10 months isn't it? Jamming's back again, but this time CHEAPPR, oh yeah, and smaller. 75p for 32 pages is still a good price, you'll all agree. This issue may not be as big as the last one, but hopefully the stuff in it is even better; ie a lot of research/care has gone into the articles, so it should be a lot more interesting. It's also a bit tidier, as the last issue was thrown together layout-wise, but as for Sounds calling us 'totally atrocious lay-out', well, they can guess what I think.

THE IMPORTANT PART: Last issue I made a strong point about Jamming not providing any income, and coming out when we feel like it. Well... since no. 10 I've left school, and am now putting most of my time into doing Jamming, among other things. Not surprisingly, it is therefore providing part of my income - cries of 'Sell out! Capitalist pig!' all over the place, I know; but I felt Jamming had the capability to become an even better fanzine and I needed time to organise & run it. As it was making money anyway, it seemed the right thing to do to make this full-time. For the people who think this is just an opportunist money-making situation, it's rather like groups such as the Au Pairs getting £15 a week wages from the group, but being full-time. Are they sellouts? Or should they get jobs so that their music is their honest emotion, without money involved? Anyway, as said - it's only record label. I wouldn't need to say all this unless I'd said the opposite last time, but honesty's a virtue...

So what's happening to Jamming? Well, it should in future be out every 10 weeks, depending if there's things worth writing about. Rather than becoming a casual magazine, Jamming's going to become more into being a fanzine, with the aims of helping groups, writing about lesser-known bands while doing big interviews to sell copies because the bands are good and we can do better interviews than the weeklies. So really this issue is no. 1 in many ways, not no. 11; there may be things wrong with this one, but it's a case of working out ideas and developing them. Future issues will have more people writing, and vitally, Jamming WILL NOT LIMIT ITSELF; ie the layout, format, price, contents may all change suddenly so it doesn't become stale; just because it's now regular doesn't mean it's going to be the same. All comments would be much appreciated, but I hope people can understand what I'm trying to do with Jamming- not just a regular magazine, but a fanzine on an organised basis.

No. 10 is pretty much worked out already. The SLF interview never materialised for this issue, nor the Mike Dred one (thunks Chrysalis & Kosmo Vinyl for phoning back). Hopefully at least Slip will be in 12, along with Wah Heat, Killing Joke, the 2nd part of the fanzine roundup, other interviews and a fair bit of poetry. On the subject of which, any budding Shakespeareans please send in contributions for possible printing. It should emerge by the end of March, so keep your eyes peeled.



Also thanks to Steven for the ^{Thanks and hello to Jeff, Chris, Rick, Ward, Ramon, Chris P, Tony P, sue, John, L, Fausto, Rafe, Mark, Simon, Chris & Rudj, ex-Face To Racer, the Rourus, Labels & fanzines that communicate; & more graphs get in touch - the least I get is my seeing anyone else.} group worthy seeing when they get together.

Everybody here can expect to see a very good show, and I am sure that the work of one **TONY MINTCHER**, the cover was by **RONALD RICHARDS** (Aarion), **DAVE JENNINGS** wrote

LIMITED NO. 1 R. I.
OF 8's + 9's JOHN LENORE
back in - hope each inc. into 750 L. L. -
a couple of things, FELIX FISCHER contrib-
uted from Switzerland, KEVIN HOPGOOD did
the cartoon (more in the future?), and many
thanks to all at BRENNER BADGES for printing.



Many thanks to Robin for doing the brilliant cover again

5	Down In The Tube Station At Midnight	Jam
6	Treason	Teardrop Explodes
7=	It's Obvious	Au Pairs
	= Politics!	Girls At Our Best!
9	Seven Minutes To Midnight	Wahl Heat
10	When I Dream	Teardrop Explodes
11=	Strange Town	Jam
	= Embarrassment	Madness
13	When You're Young	Jam
14	Enola Gay	Orchestral Manouevres In The Dark
15	Too Nice To Talk To	Brat
16	Bankrobber	Clash
17	For My Country/Unwind	UK Decay
18=	Rescue	Echo & The Bunnymen
	= Shine On Me	Ruts
	= Can't Cheat Karma	Zounds
21	Independence Day	Combat Angels
22=	In My Street	Chords
	= The Puppet	Echo & The Bunnymen
	= Fiery Jack	Fall
25	Six Minute War First EP	Six Minute War
26	How I Wrote 'Elastic Man'	Fall
27	Bloody Revolutions/Persons Unknown	Crass/Poison Girls
28	Pop Art Poem/Boy About Town flexi	Jam
29=	Ashes To Ashes	David Bowie
	= Maybe Tomorrow	Chords

1.	1. SETTING SONS	JAM
2.	- Closer	Joy Division
3.	- Sound Affects	Jam
4=	- Crocodiles	Echo & The Bunnymen
5.	- Waiting For A Miracle	Combat Angels
6.	- Unknown Pleasures	Joy Division
7.	- All Mod Cons	Jam
8.	- Grotesque (After The Gramme)	*
9.	- More Specials	Specials
10.	- The Affectionate Punch	Associates
11.	- Dragnet	Fall
12.	- Metal Box	Public Image Ltd
13.	- Scary Monsters & Super Beasts	David Bowie
14.	- Signing Off	UR40
15.	- Kilimanjaro	Teardrop Explodes
16.	- So Far Away	Chords
17.	- Strange Boutique	Monochrome Set
18.	- Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables	Dead Kennedys
19=	- Stations Of The...	Crass
19.	- The Return Of...	Durutti Column
21.	- Totale's Turns	Fall
22.	- I Just Can't Stop It	Beat
23.	- Wild Planet	B52's
24.	- New Clear Days	Vapors
25=	- Kings Of The wild Frontier	Adam & The Ants
24.	- London Calling	Clash

Out (for ever?) go those hardy perennials 'Inflammable Material', 'Clash' & 'Bollocks', but All Mod Cons holds it's own.

ZEITGEIST

Given a brief mention in Jamming 10, Zeitgeist have lived a pretty busy life in the last third of 1980. My first encounter was earlier in the year, when they brought round a demo tape which was great, although the band appeared rather doomy and moderne. While no. 10 was at the printers, I got the chance to start witnessing the opposite - their first single was released on their own Enchaine label, called Shake/Rake & Sniper, & despite the poxy artwork, was a great single, also saw them live, where they again appeared a much more straightforward and enjoyable group. And danceable. Over the next 6 weeks, gigs came regularly, & the band got a residency at the Bridge House, toured (well, did 2 gigs) in their native Cornwall, and even played Islington's legendary Pied Bull, supporting the Angelic Upstarts & Infa-Riot!

I did an interview with them soon after that, which was not the best ever conducted, but adequate enough to do an article on an 'up'n'coming band' who are 'doing something different' and 'are ready for the '80's'. The next news was that Zeitgeist had got a 3-single deal with Human Records. The first will be a reissue of the first single, with an extra track, Gimmick, and new artwork.

Looks like life is going just great for the crazy Cornwall combo. But next thing that happens is 'manager' Alan phones to say that guitarist Corin is moving back to Cornwall for a while, but will still be in the band! Eh? Yes, we're not limiting ourselves whatsoever Alan says. This sounds interesting, & so off I trudge again to the Holloway Road, home of 8 people from Cornwall, including 'vocalist' Jaf, 'guitarist' Corin 'bassist' Gary, 'drummer' Harry, & the member-who-doesn't-play-an-instrument, Alan. Other vocalist Zaz (the only female member) doesn't live there, & so isn't in the photos.

Corin: "I think over the last 3 months

we've gradually been dragged into the rock machine, and we realised just in time what was happening."

Alan: "If you start hankering after success it makes you narrow-minded, so we're not going to bother."

Corin: "It's the same as anything; if you've got blinkers on, you can only see in front of you."

And so, just over a year after initially moving to London as a band, spending 10 months playing toilets every few weeks and the other 3 months doing gigs regularly whenever they were asked to, Zeitgeist have got themselves sussed out.

Zeitgeist did their first gig in Cornwall in April '79, and played 7 down there before moving to London. Many people are currently against the idea of London as a nucleus, but as Zeitgeist explain they tried hard enough in Cornwall.

Jaf: "We used to play in this pub that had a pool room next door, and I used to say to everyone, 'Why don't you fucking come and watch us, we're great', and they'd say, 'Nah, I'd sooner play bloody pool, mate.'"

Corin: "We used to put on 2 bands and a disco for 50p, and everybody in the bar said 'I'd rather buy a pint'! That's the sort of attitude you're up against - we had to come up here to get anywhere."

The nucleus of the band moved up together, but Harry's arriving a few months later necessitated the use of a drum machine until then. It had the effect of most drum-machine bands:-

Jaf: "We used to be all doomy & serious on stage."

Alan: "We did take gigs seriously, but we don't anymore."

Jaf: "When you've got drums, you can speed things up. We enjoy gigs a lot more now."

Not surprisingly, these quotes came from the first interview, where I did mention that they seemed to be turning into a much more straightforward band...

Corin: "It's more accessible now."

Gary: "It's more acceptable dance-wise."

But Zeitgeist also made it clear where



Jaf, Gary and Harry of Zeitgeist, a 'doomy, serious' band.

they stand with regard to other bands and the business...

Jaf: "I think the big labels are fucked." Corin: "There's going to be some drastic changes in the set-up of the industry." Jaf: "Also, we've found that the venues they seem to think they're the A&R guys. I think that they're worse than the press and the record companies. They choose what bands play, yet I don't really think there's anything worth going to see."

If there's nothing good on, is it worth your being in this industry?

Jaf: "Well, we're trying to do something different, and I think we are worth seeing."

One of the last bands worth seeing?

Jaf: "Hopefully, we're one of the first of a new lot worth seeing."

Although as you'll find out if you read on, Zeitgeist now consider themselves a lot more than a rock'n'roll band, they are a group playing music. This music is their own, and very soon, everybody will know it is. Zeitgeist sound like Joy Division meet disco meet the Ants meet Zeitgeist. Their music has a permanent beat, and it's normally loud but thoughtful. The themes are generally short and repetitive, bringing the tribal element into it - a captivating noise.

Shake/Rake is a slightly strange song, the disco influence being the heaviest, while Sniper is loud & heavy, building up to a noisy climax. On each number, vocals swap between Jaf & Zaz for maximum effect. The single, self-financed & recorded in an 8-track studio, sounds as professional as a lot more-organised ones do. The rest of their set is quite similar - the best number is Untitled, beginning with a very psychedelic and bloody excellent guitar intro. Other songs include Step 1-2-3, Puppeteer, Fact, In This Town & 1st Mistake among others. Zeitgeist are not the best band going by any account, but they're definitely building towards it.

So now back to their plans (or lack of them) for the future. First off, there's the deal with Human. Shake/Rake, Sniper & Gimmick should be realised as you read this, and will be followed by Touch and another song as the second single. There's also an option on a single after that.

Meantime, back to the questions....If Corin's going back to Cornwall, what are you going to do about gigs? You were saying how much you enjoyed them.

Harry: "When we want to do one, Corin'll do it with us."

Corin: "WE'll do it when the time seems right."

Alan: "That might sound pompous, but it's not meant to be. All it is is we're just taking all the limitations away."

Jaf: "We're still going to carry on while

Alan mistakes Gary's guitar case for something else!



Corin is in Cornwall. We're going to do things up here, and he's going to do things down there."

Corin: "It's a very fluid thing."

Harry: "What's 300 miles?"

Corin: "You can have a band with 5 people in, and all you can see is the next gig. You're blurred, and by doing that you're cutting off 340° of your vision."

So what would happen if you had a gig while Corin's in Cornwall that you wanted to play?

Corin: "It's down to the thing that no individual is indispensable, and if a gig came up next Friday that Zeitgeist wanted to do, the band would do it. It would just be a different version of the group." Harry: "Zeitgeist is 5 people or 4 people or 2 people or..."

Alan: "Or the whole world."

Corin: "I might get a disagreement of opinion here (he didn't), but I think it's worth saying - when we moved up from Cornwall to find somewhere to live, get jobs etc, the group couldn't take priority; it must never take priority, because any band should always be a hobby; it should never become an obsession. It should become 1 thing out of 100 things you're involved in, and if the band becomes 100% of your life, it's the same as working 9 to 5 in a factory."

We mention PiL's attitude, and agree on a few similarities....

Alan: "PiL say they're not a band - that's the same way as Zeitgeist think."

Corin: "Put it like this - you find something interesting, & you become totally involved in it to the extent that you don't acknowledge the existence of anything else. That's got to be what will be the downfall of the human race."

Jaf: "We want to do other things as well, apart from music. We're doing a fanzine, but it won't be about music or anything."

Corin: "You can't put 4 walls round something and expect it to last. The moment you put 4 walls round it it stops moving, & anything that stops moving decays. You've got to keep it moving, & that is the 'spirit of the age'."

CONTINUED PAGE 16

SWISS WAVE

The following account of Switzerland's 4 years of new wave is by Felix Fischer, who runs a Swiss fanzine called, coincidentally & very annoyingly for us, JAMMING....

"In the beginning there was rhythm"... that's a true statement as concerns our small and creative Swiss new wave scene. There were two different types of rhythm in our beginning (around Dec. 76): first a real hard and fast rhythm from shockingly bad punk bands, with names like 101 - Sick Of The One Day Kick, Nasal Boys, Sperma and Dogbodys. All these bands had been heavily influenced by English punk groups. But there was a need for these musicians to play this new music, as in Switzerland there wasn't an independent music scene so far.

On the other hand there were a number of artists or electric musicians who liked this new wave. So arose groups like Yello, Troppo and Hertz. These groups found new technical sounds, but most of them have split and groups like Yello (the backing band of Dieter Meier, an all-round artist) or Troppo never give gigs anyway. An album from Yello, though, will be out soon on Ralph Records, while Troppo's singer Kurt Maloo has his own band now called Maloo La La (!).

First the whole scene had a long look at London and every hard-core punk had to have been there at least once. There they bought all their punk accessories including fanzines, bags, clothes etc.

The fanzines are very important. The first was No Fun from Zurich but dozens of fanzines followed after - some were long living, while others died after one or two issues. But every fanzine is important because other mediums didn't like the new scene at the time. Today the Swiss wave is a solid part of the 'serious' music magazines here and you can hear the latest sounds from the front on public radio.

You can, of course, get Swiss new wave records on independent labels. This isn't immediately obvious: jazz or rock groups always had to release their records on big labels - to organize the pressing and distribution of a record independently was impossible.

The first small labels were 'Periphery Perfume' and the label of the 'Sunrise' studio. Most Swiss new wave records have been recorded at that studio - it's pretty cheap and offers lots of possibilities.

In the spring of '78 the first Swiss punk record came out: 'Hot Love' b/w 'Die Wüste lebt?' from the Nasal Boys. I don't think an English group has ever

GROWTH of the SWISS CONFEDERATION

Scale 1:2,000,000 (32 miles = 1 inch)

Statute Miles

0 10 20 30

The original Cantons 1315
The 'Everlasting League' in 1353
The Confederation in 1513

Allied States to 1798
Subject ...

Below: Silvia Holenstein of Mother's Ruin. Pic: Andi Erni



The Swiss JAMMING is nothing to do with this mag, but covers the Swiss/German scene very well. It's written in German & is available for 50p from Schulstrasse 196, Ch-4617, Gunzgen, Switzerland.

recorded a record as fast as this single Singer and guitarist Rudolph Dietrich later left the band and recorded a single against CBS (who'd signed the Nasal Boys for an LP) called 'No Claim With Bluff & Swindle. After that he formed a new band called Kraft Durch Freude, who released an EP and single on Off Course Records. KdF split in April, and a goodbye album has been released, containing all the KdF songs and three by Rudolf's new band - Mutterfreuden.

The first group to release a single on Sunrise were Kleenex. This impudent, small, all-girl band conquered England quickly; Rough Trade distributed the Kleenex EP and organised a successful tour. After a second single Kleenex had to change their name and the singer Regular Sing left the band. With a new replacement (Christa Freud) and a saxophone player (Angie Barrak) the band resurfaced in Feb 1980 as Liliput. The first single (Splitter/Die Matrosen) is available on Rough Trade. The drummer (Liszt H) and saxist have since left the band, and the other three are looking for new members.

These two first Swiss labels were pretty rich and not so interested in other new wave bands. But more and more groups wished to make their own records, and in early 1979 the two most important labels sprung up: 'Another Swiss Label' and 'Off Course'. The owners of these companies are unprofessional but creative people.

Since the summer of 79 about 20 singles and EPs have come out on these two labels or been distributed by them. Now these two big independents are distributing records together under the label 'Off Course' and distribution 'Swiss Wave'. Other groups have published their records totally themselves. More & more bands sprung, split and changed members. Names: TNT, Glueam, Mother's Ruin (see pic), Liars, Grauzone, Tecnicolor etc. All these groups and all their records soon found their own style: the English influences were succeeded by our own Swiss wave.

The capital of the Swiss wave is Zurich, the biggest town in Switzerland. Until 1979 there were two clubs; Zurich has the most groups, the most punks and it also has boutiques selling original punk clothes. Another centre is Genf but unfortunately there are frontiers between the French speaking Switzerland (Suisse Romande) and the German speaking Switzerland. But even in the French part there are very interesting groups: Tecnicolor, Zero Heroes (with 2 English members), Bastards and Tickets (the first Swiss ska band, they've just got their first LP out on CBS). Live gigs from the groups in the German Switzerland are a bit rare but you can get their records here thanks to Swiss-Wave. Also rare are gigs from international top bands: 999, Stranglers, Elvis Costello, Sham 69, Madness, Specials etc have been here but smaller groups are never seen.

A healthy sign is that punks, skins, rudies etc don't only live in Zurich or Genf. They can be found in every big town, and in the boring provinces.

Swiss Wave rules OK!

Felix Fischer



BACK ISSUES!

Don't we ever give up? No, never. Available from us:
 no. 5 - Jam, Ants, Peel interviews, Reading, Carnival ?, Ultravox etc...
 no. 6 - Townshend, TRB, Rezillos, Mark Perry, Sore Throat, Scritti Politti interviews; Undertones, Wire, Ants, PiL, Clash, state of the radio etc...
 £35p each, 65p both
 no. 10 - Damned, Delta 5, Directions, Crass, Au Pairs, Girls At Our Best, DIY Discussion, Security Risk, Apocalypse, Chords, Pop Group, Fall, ICU etc (44 pages). (What a hype)
 £45p. £1.05 all three

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Paul Weller sent us a copy to review, but as I've lent it out, that's a bit awkward! It's an excellent book, & Paul's owed a lot of thanks for bringing poetry back into the youth's mind-a healthy form of communication, & this book communicates. The selections are from all sorts of people, covering all sorts of topics, maybe a few too many 'tower block' ones, but anyway... I feel sorry for Paul Drew, who wrote 'Entertainment!', 'cos a revamped version has sprung up on Sound Affects with out so much as an acknowledgement. The last 15 pages are by Aidan Cant, much more sophisticated poetry & a bit over the top - hard to understand, let alone relate to. But please get your hands on this - when you read about unknown books, fanzines, records, do you just read & forget? What are you doing? £1.60 from Riot Stories, 45-53 Sinclair Rd, London W14.

The new one certainly does look great and the trusted format works as well as ever. I liked, especially, the singles reviews, which are surprisingly up to date, considering the lay-off. I do have a suggestion for the future however: how about changing the layout/format to be less rigid in dealing with set topics such as band plays/gets reviewed/gets ignored...? This is just a suggestion, obviously, and I'm not criticising the current layout etc, which is great - it's just that a completely new look to a leading magazine keeps us readers on our toes (!) and makes things like a new start to be read, hopefully from a different angle. This is all a bit of a pipe dream I know but I don't believe in letting the public just soak up what your hard work produces, I'm sure the money isn't the reward you're seeking ('course it is you misguided fool - AF). Anyway, you're still streets ahead of the weeklies and I hope other people write and keep encouraging 'cos I know, from various personal experiences, that it's a very important factor.

Dave Shepherd, Wallington, Surrey

I didn't think you'd be able to improve on no. 9, but I'm glad you proved me wrong.

The best articles were on the Damned and Crass: The Damned for their humour & honesty, and not trying to use the interview to grasp at another lump of street credibility: Crass for their ideas - they may be a bit far-fetched to work on a nationwide basis, but could easily work in groups of people who share the same beliefs.

The rest of the fanzine was good, but it was a shame that the print on the Girls At Our Best! article was faded.

I don't think it's important how up to date a chart is. Charts based on record sales are useless, and charts that are made up by votes shouldn't just be made up of a list of recent releases.

LETTERS

My Top 10 singles and LP's is made up of those that I like best at the moment - it doesn't matter how old they are. If I sent in a list of a top ten made up from recent releases it would be out of date in two months. As it is impossible to have an up to date chart, time should n't be worried about.

Stuart Lomax, Chelmsford, Essex

Why is it that Jamming is not disliked and hated in the way that the music press is, ie NME, Sounds, MM?

The reason is that these papers are full of insult. Not just irony and satire but just shagnasty insult. People like Gary Bushall (sic) do this to preserve their credibility and aloofness from the media's victims - the public. They keep the media detached from the public, making the public out as inferior, unhip, etc, while they themselves are, of course, leading the 'in-crowd' (celebrities like Micky Most, Toyah Willcox (who was in a BBC programme!)) True, Jamming has a go at authority and fat men in chairs with cigars, but at least that's justified.

Maybe this letter is the work of a budding Gary Bushall. Anyway, it's the letter of someone who hates the music press, even though it gets to him in the way they intended.

Don't panic

Adam Smith, Camberwell, London (full address scribbled out)

I've picked up a copy of Jamming 10 which I feel to be the best yet, with a good cross-section of groups. I'm sure a lot of people slag off your mag as being commercial, 'cos of the amount of colour you use (we've had that complaint for some red on the cover of Back Issue)

but I feel it serves a good introduction into the world of fanzines.

There are a few points I would like to make without trying to put you down. Firstly, your Another Pretty Face single review: Virgin did not drop APP, APP walked out when they realised Virgin weren't going to let them have 'total artistic control' as specified in their contract. On top of this your comment about them seeing themselves as 'political saviours of the '80's.' What a load of crap - what makes it worse though is that if you stopped to think you would have realised it was crap as well. They, like Crass, or an other idealistic group, are singing songs that they can honestly stand by, and of course they know rock'n' roll is about enjoyment.

I know that's a lot to say about 8 lines in a 44-page fanzine, but there's nothing worse than getting a group misinterpreted. Anyway, I think Jamming is keeping the respectability of fanzines and allowing the more underground ones a chance to get printed.

Aidan, Back Issue, Acton, London

A few words about Jamming 10: everyone seems to love the cover, but I thought it was a good idea badly executed. The design saying nothing at all about the magazine or its contents. As ever, the most exciting/attractive part of it all was the layout and colour scheming. The writing was, of course, cultured and reasonable, but sometimes lacking in vitality and spirit. The Fall LP review was good, the Directions piece average (but then I'm biased because I don't really rate the band - still, a bad band could generate a stirring feature) whereas both the Au Pairs and Delta 5 struck me as more invigorating, maybe because they simply had more forthright opinions.

Johnny Waller, Edinburgh
 ps - Having a 'Brum Scene' is incredibly tribalist, patronising and pathetic. Don't package groups into boxes.

THE BEAT

Introductions should hardly be necessary for this. It was after Best Friend/Stand Down Margaret was released, Jamming decided the Beat definitely were on our side, and so the interview was fixed up. The Beat's full line-up, for those who don't know, is...

Dave Wakeling - vocals, rhythm guitar
Ranking Roger - Toasting and backing vocals
David Steele - Bass
Saxa - saxaphone
Andy Cox - Lead guitar
Everett Moreton - Drums

This interview was done mainly with David Steele, but Ranking Roger was also there for the first half an hour. David had a nasty habit of talking in a dead-pan voice while saying some very interesting things. But for the actual interview...

IS IT TRUE THAT THE RECENT MATERIAL YOU'VE JUST DONE IS THE FIRST NEW STUFF SINCE YOU STARTED?

David: Probably, yeah. We've only had about 4 days rehearsal in the last year. It happened so quickly we never really got the time. We don't write songs individually, we write them as a group. Normally they start off with me and Andy, and when we've got something we play it to Everett; then Dave comes along. Then we've got Roger and Saxa to come along, so by the time we've got the 6th person fitting in, it's quite a long time.

DID YOU CALL DAVID 'SHUFFLE'?

Roger: Yeah, Shuffle. 'Cos he shuffles when he dances. Out of time!

WERE YOU EVER WORRIED AT ONE POINT THAT YOU'D DONE TOO MUCH TOO SOON?



L-r: Everett Moreton, Ranking Roger, David Steele, Andy Cox, Dave Wakeling and Saxa.

David: No, we don't really worry that much.

Roger: Why should ya? If you worry, you've got more problems.

David: I mean, there's so many things to worry about - God! The whole state of the country, the whole state of the music industry. It's enough to go mad. I mean, who knows what's going to happen tomorrow? Roger might walk out of here and get knocked over and die!

Roger: You (Dave) might get crushed by a steamroller!

THERE'S A LOT OF RUMOURS ABOUT SAXA, ABOUT HOW PERMANENT A MEMBER OF THE BAND HE IS. NOBODY EVER SEEMS TO KNOW.

David: No we don't really - no, we don't either, I'm afraid. If you met him, you'd realise that he's not at all part of the music scene as you know it: He's never read a music paper in his life, he never listens to Radio 1, he doesn't listen to any music you listen to. He doesn't worry about that sort of thing.

Roger: He's got sense.

David: He is a full member contract-wise. He gets as much money as anyone else.

WHY WERE THERE SO MANY SINGLES OFF THE LP?

David: I prefer singles; I don't really like LPs that much.

Roger (to David): I think you should get into that, you know.

David: I can't really understand this rip-off thing. I mean, people don't have to buy them if they don't want to. I really like singles - I wouldn't mind releasing every track off the LP as a single!

WELL I RECKON BEST FRIEND WAS PROBABLY BEST SINGLE OF THE YEAR, BUT NOT THAT

MANY PEOPLE BOUGHT IT, BECAUSE BOTH TRACKS WERE ON THE LP.

Roger: I don't think it was that, because Blondie can release nearly every track on their LP, and they all go to no. 1.

David: It didn't get played on the radio because of Stand Down Margaret.

Roger: I think it was 'cos of that - 'cos the other side was political. It was a double A side, remember.

David: Every other single we've brought out has gone straight on the playlist, but that didn't go on the playlist at all for the first 2 or 3 weeks. With Mirror In The Bathroom we got Top Of The Pops at about no. 58, but when Best Friend was no. 24 they still wouldn't give us it.

(Memories come back of Top Of The Pops playing it for all of one minute on one occasion!) DO YOUKNOW HOW MUCH WENT TO CND?

David: £15,000. If it had sold as much as the other singles it would have been £25,000.

Roger: Give us a doughnut, I'm starving! David: Alright, you can have one. You can see what a racially mixed & integrated band we are - we even give each other doughnuts! That's the sort of quote you should get in, though - doughnuts. So many groups go on and on about - Dave for instance can sit and tell really patronising idiots for hours on end about how we got together and things like that. I just get really pissed off with it.

DO YOU RECKON STAND DOWN MARGARET GOT THROUGH TO A LOT OF PEOPLE THAT BOUGHT THE RECORD, LIKE THE LITTLE KIDS?

David: Oh yeah, I think so. 'Cos with things like Smash Hits it was stressed quite a lot - they gave it a whole half-page. It didn't get played on the radio of course.

DID ANYONE PLAY IT, APART FROM JOHN PEE? ?

David: I think Anne Nightingale played it. Actually Peter Powell wanted to make it his record of the week, but the BBC got so wierd about that. They got really frightened, and said 'No, no - we can't have that', and so they made Best Friend the a-side and just played it a couple of times.

ARE YOU EVER WORRIED ABOUT GETTING THE IMAGE OF BEING A POP GROUP?

Dave: I dunno, I like pop groups.

Roger: We're not a pop group through. 'Cos when you say 'pop music' I don't think of it as dancing 'cos it's too commercial.

I WOULDN'T CALL YOU A POP GROUP, BUT I THINK A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE DO. YOU'RE

REALLY INTO THE SMASH HITS MARKET, WITH ALL THE LITTLE KIDS...

Dave: Well I like that sort of thing. It sounds really corny, but when we play matinees it's the most fun. It's good seeing little kids in the street. I think older people take it too seriously and the more little kids' magazines we can get into, the happier I'll be. I wouldn't mind if they were all little kids - by little, I mean we've got a lot of fans from 12 to 16.

A LOT OF PEOPLE SEEM TO CONSIDER DAVE WAKELING AS THE LEADER OF THE GROUP. WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

David: He does loads of interviews - he likes talking to idiots. You do get so many prats coming along, and he'll quite happily chat to them for a couple of hours. He's the only one who's willing to do lots of interviews. I don't mind doing ones like this - it's just the real idiots.

DO YOU THINK ANY OF THE 2TONE GROUPS DID TOO MUCH TOO SOON, LIKE THE SELECTOR OR BODYSNATCHERS?

David: I think maybe they worked too hard.

Roger: I think you shouldn't tour too much. Like the Specials were touring continually. I used to see some of them in a night club and they'd look half dead.

David: I'd be quite happy if we never toured again. I hate touring.

Roger: I think it's great actually.

David: You don't mind doing the gigs,

Roger: Oh Christ, yeah.

David: I like to play in England - I'm not bothered about Europe any more.

A COUPLE OF MONTHS AFTER TEARS OF A CLOWN CAME OUT, 2TONE WAS THE REALLY BIG THING - EVERY SINGLE HAD BEEN A HIT AND IT WAS GOING TO HAVE TO STOP AT SOME POINT.

David: Yeah I think that's cos there was 4 - well maybe the Selector have gone down a bit - there was the Specials Madness, and us. All the 2Tone fans had already become fans of those three - there's only so many bands you can be some fans of.

DO YOU THINK IT'S GOT ANYTHING TO DO WITH ONCE THE BBC STOPPED PLUGGING THE 2TONE RECORDS, IT COLLAPSED?

Roger: No, it's just that no movement can go on for so long. Once something makes it to the top - after a while it seems to sound all the same. I think some of the 2Tone bands, or bands playing that, are all going the same and you can hear them all going 'Chink-chink', & you think "Oh no, not another ska record." 'Cos I really got into ska for a

time, and then I went off it for a bit, 'cos it started to sound really the same - it got really boring.

THERE NEVER SEEMED TO BE THAT MANY SKA BANDS THOUGH.

Roger: No, but a lot of bands may do the odd ska number, or something that sounds very similar to ska. It's like when the Pistols came out, and got big, and everybody wanted to get in, you know. And 'cos everybody wanted to be a punk band, it killed punk off. And it was the same with ska.

YOU AS A GROUP HAVE ALWAYS DESCRIBED YOURSELVES AS A 'PUNK-REGGAE' GROUP; BUT YOU NEVER SEEMED TO ME TO BE VERY PUNKY.

Roger: Well I think we're going more towards reggae than anything else. We used to have a lot of punk numbers that we used to do really fast, even as fast as Click Click. And we changed our music to the way it suited us, and to the way we were all settling into one another. I think we've gone more reggae.

David: Yeah, we are more into reggae now. But then other members of the band might not be into reggae so it's a compromise.

(Ranking Roger now departs for the dentist. The rest of the interview is with David on his own)

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE SPECIALS DOING MAGGIE'S FARM, AFTER YOUR STAND DOWN MARGARET. DO YOU RECKON THEY'LL GET SLAGGED OFF FOR IT?

David (laughing): Yeah, they could do. But it's quite a good fashion, if it is a fashion anyway! It's like nuclear power and arms. I don't think getting rid of that would solve anything whatsoever. They'd just find something else like germ warfare that would wipe us all out. Getting rid of nuclear weapons is becoming an easy topic - you can be against nuclear arms and you don't really have to worry about it: You don't have to think about old people dying or unemployment. You can just think "Oh, I'll be anti-nuclear," and a lot of people have started doing that. It IS a bad thing, but the only way to change anything is to change the system. You're not going to change anything individually.

DO YOU RECKON ANYBODY WILL BE ABLE TO DO THAT?

David: What, change the whole system? No - I used to be really into that, I used to read a lot. But I suddenly realised although the world is in an absolutely vile state, there is nothing I think we can do about it. It's just fucked, basically.

APPARENTLY WITH GO-FEET YOU'RE ALLOWED

TO DO FIVE OTHER GROUPS SINGLES A YEAR. WHAT'S HAPPENED?

David: We haven't found anyone we like. We'll be releasing a single by the Mood Elevators in the new year, called 'Driving By Night'. And we're going to release a reggae LP called Heart Of The Congos - it's a Jamaican group. It's not available in England, but it's really really good - one of the best reggae LPs ever. We were thinking of doing a 12" of four or five Birmingham groups, but the last couple of weeks is the first time we've been in Birmingham for some time. So now we've got the chance to go and see some groups.

WHAT SAY DO ARISTA HAVE IN GO-FEET?

David: None really - they have to put out what we tell them to put out. But they can bungle lots of things; for instance you can give them some artwork & they can lose it.

DO THEY DO THAT DELIBERATELY?

David: Oh yeah. Like when we released Hands Off, She's Mine & Twist'n'Crawl; that was supposed to be a double 'A' side. But the first pressings accidentally appeared with 'B-side' for Twist'n'Crawl.

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THEM?

David: No I'm not. But compared to almost every other record company we've got a really good deal.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE BEAT ARE ABOUT THE MOST WIDELY-INFLUENCED BAND THERE IS.

David: Yeah, probably 'cos we don't



really agree in music tastes. 'Cos I play bass I really like reggae bass & soul bass. Whereas as Andy & Dave play guitar, they're much more into guitar music. But then Roger's a toaster, & he likes toasting, although he can sing - he does do some quite good harmonies. Saxa's a saxaphone player, so he plays jazz. Everything's like a compromise. I don't like the guitar sound on the LP - they're too raunchy.

SO DO YOU EVER GET PROBLEMS WITH YOUR DIFFERENT STYLES, WITH EVERYONE TRYING TO WIN THEIR STYLE OVER?

David: Not really, because we usually compromise. Like on the LP there were things done that I agreed to, and it meant I could have things taken off Mirror In The Bathroom & Big Shot that I didn't like. We always compromise.

DO YOU GET MANY PUNKS AT YOUR GIGS?

David: We used to get loads, before we became a two-tone/mod group (he didn't say it in inverted commas, but probably meant it that way). And then for 2Tone mania we were just getting loads of mods and skinheads. Then when the LP came out we started getting lots of other people: hippies 'cos they're into reggae; punks 'cos they're into things like Two Swords and Click Click. Also - in places like London, everybody's a punk or a 'something', whereas if you play somewhere like Wales, where they haven't got strong fashion bands, it's not like that. I mean, what is a punk anyway? I think it's a bit wanky. I was really into punk at first - 1976, 77 - it was one of the most exciting things that had ever happened. I was on the dole as well. So I got a bit pissed off with all these pathetic punk groups and all these idiots thinking they're punks. Instead of Stairway To Heaven, it's Anarchy In The UK - it's the same old 'Classic' crap.

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE MOD THING?

David: It's really weird - down south it's all skinheads, but up north there's loads of mods. They seem to be more into it, and there's some really good clubs. It was like when us & The Selecter did our first ever tours, together, & we'd play places like Blackpool and the Specials would come and see us. So there'd be like The Beat, The Selecter, The Specials and maybe a couple of Madness all in the same club, and nobody had ever heard of us. And it was a really exciting atmosphere - we thought something was happening again, but it didn't last for long.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S FINISHED NOW?

David: Not up north. It seems that everybody's become a rude boy - the little kids anyway. A lot of mods I know have had their hair cut and started wearing

harringtons, just to stop themselves getting beaten up. But they still like the same music. It's skinheads and mods vs. punks, but it doesn't happen much up here. We get a lot more girls than the other 2Tone groups.



DO YOU THINK IT'S 'COS OF THE DANCING GIRL EMBLEM?

David: Yeah maybe, & maybe because of Roger and Dave being sex symbols! We get a lot of posters in Jackie & Oh Boy - I didn't realise how strong it had become until I went to see The Specials & The Selecter quite recently, and almost all the audience were male skinheads. Our audiences are in some places almost 50% female. It's just great, because I think it's really vile when you get a macho audience.

WELL I DON'T KNOW IF I MISSED THE POINT, BUT I THOUGHT HANDS OFF, SHE'S MINE WAS A REALLY SEXIST SONG.

Dave: NO! We never thought of that, ever. We never thought of it as sexist. But - if you've got a girlfriend or a wife or something, you certainly don't want to lose her. Maybe you do want to hold her, but it doesn't mean you want to dominate her. It was just like a pop song. I think maybe you - or rather, one - is taking things a bit too seriously.

WHAT WAS AMERICA LIKE?

David: Horrible. It was vile - a really stinking, degenerate place that's got no hope at all. It was really depressing, but each state's like a different country. Saxa & Roger both enjoyed it anyway. We're going to do like 2 week tours in future, taking in a different area at a time. I really like playing in England anyway, especially on the last tour when we weren't getting any violence at all. You wouldn't know how wonderful Radio 1 is compared to American radio - there it would be an avant-garde radio. We think we're badly off, but compared to everywhere else we're amazing.

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FANZINES

A-M

Yeah, at long last it's time for another 'in depth' fanzine round-up. This issue is for fanzines from A to M,

the rest will go in no. 12. Hopefully it's not necessary to do a long intro about

how important fanzines are: those of you who read them regularly will already know that; those who don't, take an word for it. Long may they thrive.....

A lot of people will probably think this is Jamming looking down on all other fanzines - hopefully it won't come across that way, because that's not how it's meant. This is just my opinion of other fanzines, and they've all got something worthwhile in them.

AFTERMATH - How to start in style: If Jamming is the 'definition contemporary pop-zine', then this is the perfect fanzine. Energetic, important, attractive mag done by Tony M., who, as he rips the printing off at work only does 1-200; it should be in the thousands. Up to no. 4 & he also does a less musical ASSASSIN - both stink of creativity & anti-apathy. Vital reading from 15 George Gillett Court, Banner St. London EC1. *whatever that means. 10p

ADVENTURES INTO REALITY: No details. 15p Alan, 56 Cheveral Ave, Radford, Coventry

AIN'T BIN TO NO ART SCHOOL/ THE POWER OF ROCK 'N' ROLL/ 1988/ THE BOP THAT JUST WON'T STOP - All these are done by one Mike

Weller, who is getting off his arse and doing something different (in fact, lots of things different). Ain't Bin... is a pop art brochure, including pages of other magazines - an excellent little 'zine; The Power... is a 5-part/page poem, well-illustrated & written from the heart; 1988

was a comic of which there's so far been 2 issues - a bit expensive (as they all are); The Bop... is 3 rock'n'roll poems dedicated to Gene Vincent & again self-illustrated. Mike is doing something so different that he has a very limited audience, & his mags are therefore a bit dear. But that can be altered if you all send him 50p-£1 & get some education. 4 Anerly Station Road, Anerly, London, SE20

ALLIED PROPAGANDA - Has a lot of interviews almost for the sake of it, & a very scrappy layout, but gives a lot of reading, if not urgency. From Ray & Mick, 108 Ribblesdale Ave, Northolt, Middx... 20p

ALL THE POETS - Believe it or not, a poetry mag, that I haven't had a close look at yet. No. 2 from Better Badges... 25p

ALTERNATIVE SOUNDS - One of the truly active 'zines, responsible for the 'Sent From Coventry LP' & the excellent Something Else spot on fanzines. Last issue for some time (no. 18!) is just out, & is unfortunately terrible. A pity, 'cos it was one of the

best, regularly changing format, always interesting & home-grown, but very hastily put together (no. 18's mistake). Don't pack in a good mag, especially on such a bad note. Martin, 142 Coat Ave., Coventry 3. 30p

AUTONOMY - Haven't seen it. Tom, 21 Church St, Southwell, Notts 20p

BACK ISSUE - Rightly slagged for failing to deliver almost anything apart from interviews. It's hard to explain why a fanzine can't be just interviews, but there's something very wrong about it - just very uninteresting. That said, no. 2 has some good things on Crass, Pil and Toyah. From Better Badges, 'cos they don't include an address. No. 3 now out, haven't seen it. 20p

BEAST - Not a fanzine at all, but a glossy protest magazine concerning nuclear power/arms, drugs, vivisection, conservation, vegetarianism etc. Worrying reading that is slightly diluted by the trendy-leftist approach, the sort of thing Dick Tracy does in the NME. 20p Bleinheim Crescent, London, W1 60p

BETTER BADGES AND FANZINES : A PERSONAL STATEMENT OF THE FACTS. (WHAT?)

Better Badges have a mixed reputation with fanzines: millions go there to get printed, & the other few million seem to hate BB because they reckon it makes fanzines easy, takes away their identity and makes them into a business. Many that do go there dislike BB because they take so long and are too easy-going about things. With this, I want to try & put the record straight so that people know what Better Badges do & where they stand with the fanzines they deal with. (Someone once said to me "Oh, you're owned by Better Badges aren't you" - absolute bullshit)

In the spring of 1979, when Jamming 7 was being put together, I went to Better Badges, then being operated from a small garage in Notting Hill, to try & get an advert. Get one I did, & the hippy in charge, Joly, said he could reduce/enlarge/screen/reverse our artwork as wished, and so we went back there & got that done. Then we had incredible problems over our printing, & to immense relief we learnt that Joly was installing a litho machine and he would be willing to print Jamming 7 for cost price, as a sort of guinea pig for his litho. Although the printing wasn't the best, Joly had saved Jamming from probably packing in, sparing a lot of time & gaining no money, for which we'll always be grateful.

By the time we came round to printing no. 8, Joly had got used to the litho, & had printed a couple of other little mags. We decided to go overboard on the colour, and the result was possibly the best Jamming to date. Certainly, the colour was something different, & everybody wanted to know where we got it printed. Everybody found out, & Better Badges started printing fanzines by the dozen.

The distribution of fanzines also started getting off the ground in the summer of '79. It started off mainly being sold in their shop, and has now built up to about the most extensive fanzine distribu-

tion going (not that there is an adequate independent distribution). Copies are taken by shops that take their badges, sold at concerts, sold mail order - it's the best there is.

So that's how it started. What happens when you take a fanzine in to be printed? Basically, you leave it there with notes of what needs to be done to the artwork, then after a week, phone up every day, when Mike or Joly will tell you that it's almost ready, until it actually is. This can take ANY amount of time whatsoever. After that, they'll probably sell quite a lot for you (generally, at least 3 figures) & you can accept a double-sided Ad ad for which they'll do the stapling. Average prices - Preparation: £1/A4 PMT £5/Hr labour/Printing (including plates): 500-1000 each double-sided £4, 1000-£15, additional thousands: £10. EXP: £5 a second. Colation & stapling: £20/1000 & a ring to hold. Advertisers' supplement will be swapped. For colation, Colated Fanzines have no VAT, they'll buy some to distribute if good & cash on collection.

That makes it all sound pretty decent. Yet as mentioned at the beginning, many fanzines dislike Better Badges for the reasons earlier stated. To go through them: Making fanzines easy? Well, if it's part of a fanzine's job not to be able to find a decent printer, then it must be making fanzines easy. But as finding a decent printer used to trouble about 9 out of 10 it's hard to complain about there being one willing to get things done in a friendly way & at a cheap price. Making them into a business? This might be the case if they were making a lot of money out of fanzines, but in fact they are losing quite considerably on them. This probably doesn't have as much to do with actual printing costs as it does with the enormous stockpile of 'zines, & the placing of ads in each & every fanzine. So if it is a business, it's one where the fanzines are gaining more than the 'businessmen'. They take too long? Yeah, well that's a bit hard to ignore. The early Jamming

were in there only as long as it took them to be printed, but once BB really took off on the fanzine thing at the start of 1980, things got out of hand. They simply took on too many to print straight off, & for most mags, it's vital to get your ideas on the street while they're still fresh. Jamming 10 took six weeks to get printed, & at the time, that was quick. The trouble with BB being so easy-going about things is they say they can't work by a schedule as they wouldn't be able to keep to it anyway. With two printing presses running now, however, it all seems to be speeding up considerably, so it's possible this problem might start to disappear. Then again, it might not.

Too easy-going about things? This is mentioned above & though it's a true statement, on most occasions it's an advantage. It makes a change to have printers who care about what's being printed, who don't quibble, who give & take suggestions and advice, and if things do get botched up now and again, then Joly will tell you "It's punk, innit?" After experiencing rip-off printers who just can't be bothered if the result is shoddy, with Jamming 6, BB are a necessary firm. Takes away a fanzine's identity? I've left this 'till last, 'cos it's the most worrying aspect of BB's rise as alternative printers. It's embarrassingly true that many fanzines coming off the BB press look very much like each other, in the way of glossy cover, normal inside paper, BB ads & an extra colour on the cover etc (yes Jamming fits into the first 3 of those 4). It seems that although there are more fanzines because of BB's activities, there's also more bad ones, especially among the BB ones. How to change this really lies with the fanzines themselves, in that all those being printed there need to carve out their own identity before they become "just another Better Badges fanzine". Easier said than done, but it's the one problem that really needs to be solved.

BIFF - Again, nothing to do with music - it's a pocket-sized colour comic that is very psychedelic & confusing. C/o BCM IT, London WC1 15p

BIT OF CULTURE - Good title, no details. 38 Water End, York 15p

BLACKPOOL ROX - The issue I saw (4) was so pathetic as to be unbelievable - just a complete waste of time. However, it's had good write-ups in NME & Sounds so either they've improved or it says something for said papers tastes. 53 Anchors-holme Lane, Blackpool, Lancs 15-20p

BLACK AND WHITE - From Dublin, normally features more graphics than writing, but as the graphics are meant to accompany the writing it gets a bit confused. No. 3 has the Virgin Prunes & Sandy Pearlman. Pete & Steve, 10 Dodder Park Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14, Ireland 30p

BLACK DWARF - Named after 19th anarchist mag, so you can guess what this is about. It's difficult to review anarchist 'zines but I reckon this is one of the better ones, with a good layout that makes the less-heavy-than-most writing easier to read. Last issue (4) was some time ago. 145a Ladbroke Grove, London W9 25p

BLUE BEAT - The 3rd issue has just appeared almost a year after the 1st with a glossy fold-out poster design. Being based in Cambridge, it has a massive student audience, but rather than educating this market, it caters for them - the worst thing about it. Very professional mag, worth getting from 70 St. Eligius St., Cambridge 20p

BRASS LIP - A one-off feminist mag from Brum with the Raincoats, Au Pairs, Kleenex etc, gets very heavy at times (& misdirected) but I suppose it's necessary - now and again. No address - try BR. 014. ?

BRAVE NEW SOLDIERS - Only seen a couple of issues - is it still going? Covers local Romford scene very well. Get in touch Dave. 38 Athelstan Road, Harold Wood, Romford, Essex RM3 10p

BREACH OF THE PEACE - The first issue was very scrappy, but then it's true - most first issues are shit. Exceptions are rare, and it's better to judge a fanzine on at least it's 2nd issue. This has a no. 2 out, but I haven't looked at it yet. From Better Badges 20p

BREAKOUT - An SLF fanzine, with apparently everything you ever wanted to know about them. At least they know their market. Better Badges 25p

ANTI CLIMAX - Hard-core punk mag which -14-

has got it's own style, layout, format and market, and is sticking to it. 3 Church Crescent, Sproughton, Ipswich, Suffolk 20p

BURNT OFFERING - Again, a fanzine that seems to have got itself settled in & then not bothering to alter much. Well into double figures & good value. From Rough Trade. 10p

BUTTERFLY COLLECTOR - The only issue I saw was almost a year ago, which was no. 3 & full of Jam interviews, Jam reviews & more reviews & other mod bands. From 232 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading 15p

CAN'T EXPLAIN - At least some people aren't scared to write about mod. The first issue got a lot of praise it didn't deserve, the second should have got praise but didn't, featuring Speedball & Long Tall Shorty, & excellent layout. Apparently there will be another issue, but when is debateable. From Rough Trade. 20p

CHAINSAW - The only remainder from the initial '77 surge left in this half. Incredibly erratic; if only it could appear regularly it would be great. No. 10 features the Au Pairs, Disque Attak & 4 pages of Mike Weller's cartoons. From CharlieChainsaw, Box 787, 1 North End Rd, London W14 25p

CIPHER - A strange affair - that's all I can remember about it. 44 Bromwood Road, London SW11 20p

CITY FUN - Manchester's biggest, that I still haven't seen, although it's now up to the mid-twenties! c/o R.F.P., Ground Floor, Ashleigh Hse, Booth Rd, Altrincham

COBALT HATE - The most unreadable @ist mag about. To them, anarchy means the freedom to be a mess. Very hard to understand the writing when you find it anyway. From Rough Trade. 10-20p

COMMON KNOWLEDGE - Heavy approach to DIY Recording you'd expect from Nag, Bendle & Igor. Good interview with Mark Perry and Desperate Bicycles, boring one with Mayo Thompson, & a good thing on doing your own records. From 11 Ferrestone Road, Hornsey, London N8 15p

CRASH SMASH CRASH RING - According to Aftermath, one of the best, most honest 'zines going. 1 & 2 were free, no. 3's 25p. From Rough Trade.

CRISIS - An A4 sized black & white comic concerning 'The Rise And Fall Of Johnny No-One'. Great stuff. I don't know if it's lifelike, 'cos I don't live in Huddersfield, but it's entertaining, well-drawn, funny, & I can't wait for episode 2. Only 15p from Kev Hopgood, 101 Manchester Road, Slaithwaite, Nr. Huddersfield

CROSS NOW - The first issue was pretty crap I ~~can't explain~~, but the second is superb. John Peel & Dolly Mixture interviews, but the best bits are the cartoons and interviews with people on the street etc. Now they know what they're doing, could soon be vital reading. From BB 30p

DAMAGED GOODS - Hasn't appeared for a year, but editor John Lee insists there will be a no. 5. Hope so, 'cos it was one of the best. Actually, the reason is obvious - he did the unthinkable and (gasp!) slagged off Joy Division! A warning for you all. Cockstone Hill Farm, Goldsborough, Knaresborough, Yorks HG5 30p

~~DAMN LATIN~~ - Haven't seen it. 14 Kingsway,
Nuneaton CV11

DANCE CRAZY - A really funny, very artistic account of dancing of all types, done by one of the people at BB, which explains it's excellent use of colour. Well worth it for a laugh. From BB. 20p

DECEMBER CHILD - For all I care, this could be done by the leader of The Jam, but it still doesn't excuse hippy titles, articles on Syd Barrett (huh!) & poems galore. Think you're a pop star or something, eh? Actually, this is pretty great - Paul Weller's first go at a fanzine with some very good poetry by him & others, an excellent, if overindulgent, piece on pop art & an irrelevant thing on Syd Barrett. A much more workable idea than Riot Stories & although it lacks good layout, disproves the 'first issue' idea. From Better Badges. 25p

DOUBLETHINK - Good title, but according to Vague is an average fanzine. John, 14 Earls Close, Bishopstoke, Einstleigh, Hants. 10m

~~NEVER~~ ^{NEVER} Crasszine slagged off by everyone (including Crass) as same as the others, yet I reckon this is one of the better ones, certainly more enjoyable than some of the more well-known @ rags. Good layout & readable tirades, & as it's free, no complaints. Rough Trade.

FEAST IN THE GARDEN - From Grimsby, and
pretty new. 54 Lord Street, Grimsby.

FRAGILE - Cornwall wakes the up! Worth the getting just for the fact that someone down there is doing something. No. 1 only took 6 months to get printed, but I hope editor Andy doesn't give up as it's good to see news from down there. 3 Clear View, Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 20p

FRAYED EDGES - Southampton fanzine up to around no. 4. 81 Bedford Place, So. on. 20p

FANZINES AND FLEXIS

With the amount of esay ways of presenting music nowadays, some fanzines are currently putting in flexidiscs, eg Story So Far, In The City, Toxic Graffiti. Quite a few people have asked why we don't put one in Jamming, so here's the reasons:-

It seems to me that the few that have so far included flexis have done so almost purely to sell copies. Obviously, the group's featured are among the fanzines favourites, but it still means people stop buying the fanzine for your writing & buy it for someone else's music. Basically, it's a free fanzine with every flexi-disc! Take a look at Flexipop - a load of pathetic teenybop crap but it sells hundreds of thousands, 'cos it includes good flexis. Crass have said they've done the Toxic Graffiti one to get the mag in to as many peoples' hands as possible: fair enough, but can't you see everyone paying out 50p for a Crass flexi & ignoring the magazine.

It would be good if fanzines that did want to do flexis could practice what they preach & do ones featuring the small, unknown bands they write about. That would be doing everyone a favour and helping the music 'scene' as well.

FUMES - Don't know if it's still going, but it ought to, as Scotland's drying up in the way of fanzines. Good to look at, a bit boring to read, but was aiming to give away flexis of local groups & so needs praise. Daniel Easton, 22 Nithsdale Street, Glasgow G41 20p

GEEK - Nobby Nils' pseudo-intellectual magazine. Never saw no. 3, as it sold out immediately. More importantly, Nobby did his own poetry book 'A POUND OF FLESH IN THE SUGGESTION BOX' which was excellent stuff, & well worth getting from 34 Woodham Road, Bellingham, London SE6 20p

GOD ON THE SCREEN - Seems to be a Crass-
zine, but can't comment as I haven't seen
it. No. 4 has Throbbing Gristle & Crass.
Steve Moran, 6 Churchdown Rd, Liverpool 10p

GRANITE CITY - From Aberdeen & the issues I saw a year ago were horrible. Could have improved. Inky Books, 224 Union St, A'deen

GRINDING HALT - A typical 'fanzine'. Very chummy and rather boring layout-wise, but no. 6 had a good Shrink interview, & it covers Reading well. From Quicksilver, 131 The Butts Centre, Reading, Berks. 25p

CUTTERSNIPE - Mentioned last issue, and not much more needs to be said. From RT.

HARSH REALITY - Like the other Ipswich zine, Anti-Climax, very hard-core punk and very scrappy. Not particularly inspiring, but into double figures. 64 Corder Road, Ipswich, Suffolk 20p

HUMAN DEBRIS - No info, but the only Bristol ^{inside} ~~new~~zine I know of: 20a North St.,, Bedminster, Bristol 10p

I.D. - A fashion magazine - the good bits are the pictures and details of fashion on the street, but the rest of it is rather arty. From Better Badges

DEATH OR GLORY Meet the writers when in Nottingham. The first issue wasn't much cop, but they never are. Have to wait & see.

IMPRINT - Another from Dublin. & like

most regular fanzines, is erratic. Suff-
fers from large type makes quick reading
but no. 11 has very good Dexy's & Sector
27 interviews. 41 Silchester Park, Glen-
eagley, Co. Dublin. Suddenly 30p

KID - Kent fanzine. IMPOSSIBLE DREAM - Poison Girls zine,
all graphical, heavy going. From BB. 25p

INTENSIVE CARE - A case of the first
issue rule. A good 6 Minute War interview,
but little else. Better Badges 25p

IN THE CITY - The one Jamming's always
slagged with or praised with. This is
because we're both 'established' (a
deadly sin), but otherwise it's strange,
because I don't feel any affinity to
them at all. In The City is undoubtedly
the poshest of them all - glossy cover,
very neat layout etc. But they've got
themselves in a terrible rut of groups
moving on from Ultravox-Tubeway Army-
Gloria Mundi to Gary Numan-Grass-Adam &
The Ants-Poison Girls - the first 3 were
all interviewed in consecutive issues,
while the Poison Girls were 2 apart) &
it's not particularly invigorating reading
either. No. 15 has a Poison Girls
flexi which seems to have decreased sales
(listen to it & find out why), but contrary
to popular belief, they're a good
couple of people & their hearts are in
the right place. Pete & Frank, c/o Com-
pendium, 234 Camden High St, London NW1 30p

IT'S DIFFERENT FOR GIRLS - A new Sheff-
field fanzine split between being a photo
mag & ordinary fanzine. The first issue
is very good. From Gary Cartwright, Flat
5, 15 Rovendale Road, Sheffield 10 20p

KILLING TIME - A bit of a 'BB' fanzine.
Looks attractive though doesn't always
read so, & in its attempts to help all
local groups, writes about sexist HM

MENTAL MAPPING - LETTERS

MENTAL MAPPING - A good idea not fully
realised. The idea was to interview aver-
age people on the street, but as the
interviews are without explanation, it's
a bit hard to understand - rather like
Cross-Word. Lots of cartoons as well.

From 14b Grosvenor Avenue, London NW1 25p

MENTAL CHILDREN - Features the Banshees
& Better Badges. 30p

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This 'article' gets heavy over 2 problems - the lack of decent live music, especially prevalent in London, and the currently popular chant that after 25 years, rock'n'roll is dead.

AF goes over the top once more in

'It's 4 years later and what have we got?'

An October Saturday night in London, rock'n'roll capital of the world. At this time of year, at the weekend, there should be plenty to go and see, so let's have a look at the groups gracing London's pubs and clubs tonight:-

THE SPIRIT OF '76?
And what have we got? Groups with names like Trimmer & Jenkins, Jo Ann The Atoms, Huang Chang, Ricky Cool & The Rialtos, Rye & The Quarter Boys, Hank Moonster, Duffo, Red Beans & Rice, Faith Band, Cool, and The Toffs. Time to get depressed or what?

It was hardly as if there were exceptions: Essential Logic and Nash The Slash seemed to be the only 2 bands of real interest; but then let's face it - even at a good concert, there's no atmosphere left any more. Good records abound, from groups who don't often gig, but to me a group's nothing as exciting if I haven't seen them live. And the groups that are gigging:- well, the agencies have a hold on London, and they are booking bland, simple bands who play clean rock music with no imagination, no character and no feeling, as the above names exemplify. (NB - Apologies if there are good acts in the above list, but the rundown of bands in the NME raises no spirit inside me whatsoever.)

All that basically adds fuel to the fire whose burning message reads 'Rock'n' roll' is dead, apparently murdered by recession, home taping and other accessories/alternatives, it's own failure to cope with growing old, and the unquestionably horrific idea that it wanted to run its own life.

'It's so easy to believe that this is the case, that 'rock'n'roll', for want of a better word, is finished; but if you do that, you've admitted defeat, & you're giving people the encouragement to destroy you next time round as well. I mean, if they take our music away, what have we got????'

It's pretty easy for Mick Farren to pronounce rock'n'roll as defunct in the NME (and get paid over £150 for saying so), but then he knows that his hopes

of making it as a rock star finished a long time ago. Approaching middle-age, people like him are too old to enjoy it anyway (though as he pointed out, there are a handful of older characters who are still worthwhile), so why let others?

But the depressing story continues. In the early part of this year, police hassling of clubs closed some and made most become over-strict on age and drinking-up time. And now The Clarendon, one of the few alternatives left, has just been closed by the GLC's pathetic attempts to stop people enjoying themselves. And then they wonder why there's trouble on the streets.

I'm desperately trying to prevent this thing rambling away and joining the queue of mourners at r'n'r's funeral. Because I DON'T BELIEVE THAT 'ROCK'N' ROLL' IS DEAD. Alright, so it's going to have to adapt, and some people (eg big labels) are going to have to rethink or die, but I haven't a clue how it's going to progress, and that's not the point anyway. What I do know is rock'n' roll is the celebration of youth (youth as/is a mental state, not physical) - there's no other means of communication so effective, so enjoyable, so immediate away would leave us without an adequate voice, without an efficient means of enjoyment, and many of us almost without a purpose.

The answer? Not so easy. There are people who succeed in creating gigs that have atmosphere, but these are generally one-offs. The actual club scene is totally dead, and yet so many people are being creative - just look at the number of DIY tapes and records. Again, I'm not saying whether it's good or bad, but at least the music is in the artist's hands. Without trying to preach, what is needed now is a concerted effort by everyone involved to build up live music again, be creative, and above all, show that 'rock'n'roll', whatever form it will take, still exists and is going to be put in our hands, even if the whole structure does collapse, hopefully to be rebuilt in a more realistic way.

"It may have been done before, but the music's an open door"

I think we've lost our reason
We stumble blindly and that vision
must be restored"
I think we've lost sight of the gods
We should be working for
I think we've lost our perception
I think we've lost our sight
we should be working for

ALBUMS

by AF

ADAM AND THE ANTS: Kings Of The Wild Frontier (CBS)

What do you expect, a review of the second Adam & The Ants LP or a review of Adam & The Ants as they are now? Well you're getting both, that's what.

Kings Of The Wild Frontier is one of the best LPs of 1980. The old Ants sound has been discarded in favour of the new, already well-known tribal feel, fresh & exciting, wild and proud. All the LP is in this vein, so it's obvious Adam now considers this his sound. The most enjoyable part for me is the harmonies, on tracks like 'Jolly Roger' & 'The Magnificent Five'. The repetitive subject matter means the LP starts losing its liveliness until it freshens up again on the last 3 tracks, with 'Jolly Roger' (an appraisal of pirates set to a nautical tune), 'Making History' (about murders) and 'The Human Beings' (a recital of Indian tribes). Despite having thrown off the old HM Antmusic, this group has what so many lack - rhythm. And this album is full of unresistable, rhythmic music.

As for the actual Adam & The Ants nowadays, that's a different matter. One of the major worries was Adam's recent denial of being punk in Sounds, after all his claims to the opposite, but he took that back pretty quickly, so on to other things: The LP includes a catalogue where there's a whole load of quotes by various big-paper journalists, describing the Ants tribal sound. But I thought the Ants were the Press Darlings! Or maybe now they're famous it's no longer an important issue. Yet who wants to know what Deanne Pearson said about the 'Kings' single in Smash Hits? Why not have a load of fanzine quotes, as they're supposed to be the real medium? A minor complaint, but an example of the sort of thing Ants fans are worried about. Other complaints include the way virtually all the album is about Adam And The Ants: Adam made his name, & was slagged off, for writing about sexual taboos, dead presidents, religion etc, yet Kings is concerned with but one thing: Adam & The Ants, their (his) struggle, music, the wonderful coming and so on. For a couple of songs it seems a good idea, but the LP's full of it. Three singles off the album is also a bit suspicious, not the sort of thing we expect from old Adam. I don't want to go on too much because I think Adam is a genuine person doing genuine things he believes in - the recent photo on the cover of Sounds showed a pride so rarely seen in an artists' face. It's just a worry that Adam might really become the new Gary Glitter, and after seeing HIM recently, that would be a sad thing.

The music and most of the image has always been magnificent. Don't spoil it, Adam.



Tom Robinson's SECTOR 27 (Fontana)

It's embarrassing to all concerned when someone like Tom Robinson comes back on the scene; everyone tries not to, but ends up making comparisons. Tom, to prevent this, has refused to give the group any image at all - a good & bad idea. In this case, bad 'cos they seem an interesting band, if only we knew more about them.

Tom Robinson is still being used as a name to sell a band, which I don't like, and on the LP he handles lead vocals, but not bass. The music? Difficult to describe - it's all based round your average rock; at times very average, at times, a bit funky, and at times, as on the single 'I'm Not Ready', it tries to be a bit daring.

The lyrics all sound very interesting - the same subjects

but much more subtle - yet the lack of image/explanations makes it a bit hard to understand. 'Invitation' and 'Where Can We Go Tonight' both sound slightly the same - slightly funky, and 'Mary Lynne' and 'Looking At You' are both standard r'n'r the latter a lot better than the former. 'Five Two Five' is good, and the whole of side 2 is excellent, including 'Total Recall', and an effective song about standards called 'Bitterly Disappointed'. 'Take Or Leave It' finds Tom singing about record labels - a group singing about the 'biz' always sounds so strange - only Mark Smith does it with ease.

The ten tracks are all pretty long, too long at times. But the LP is enjoyable rock - not an album to be played all the time, but one to be played willingly when it is. Tom's in a bit of trouble with his anti-image - something will have to be done to get attention and success, or he'll fail again. But did he really fail last time?.....



SPEC RECORDS: No Cowboys (Spec Records)

No, it can't be true. After two years, at last - a PRAG VEC ALBUM! Now under the conglomerate 'Spec Records', and with an extra and a half member, the relief of their existence and refusal to give up makes up for any flaws in the LP.

Not that there are many. The main problem is a general one - lack of money and the need to get some product out (this is a totally self-financed album) means this is not as professionally recorded as it could be. If it had all been done as well as 'Expert', it would be a magnificent album - as it is, it's still a very worthwhile project, and is there to give them a starting block - the next record will show their true colours.

The tracks are by various groups (all the same people), but most are credited to Spec Records. The music is different without being 'weird' - there's a lack of standard r'n'r rhythms and set-ups, but it's still (mainly) guitars and drums in 4/4. The synthesizer is much more prominent than before, & Sue Gogan's voice is a vital element in the identity, often doubled and singing as it shouldn't.

Best moments are prag Vec's 'Third Person', & Spec Records 'Happy Valley', a swingalong jaunty piece, with the repetitive line 'Next month, I'm going to buy a deep freeze', and also the mainly instrumental and very quiet 'By The Sea'.

The rest of the LP is mostly in the same vein and good - 'Nervous', 'Breaking Point', 'Uh Oh Frotic', 'Welcome Home', & 'You're The Gun'. 'Men's Casual Wear 1962' by the Couch Potatoes and 'My Name's Eddie' by Major Eddie are both instrumentals recorded in their flat over a year ago - both revolve around the synthesizer, and the first is much better than the second, which is very Voltaire-like. The LP ends with prag Vec live at the YMCA doing 'Cigarettes', and it sounds a lot better on their first EP.



Tom Robinson's SECTOR 27: SUE & GOGAN, DAVID BOYD, NICK COOK

So, 13 tracks of varying degrees of 'good'-ness. A problem is that it's not a record to be played loud, but apart from that it's well-presented, and gives a lot of hope yet. What are you waiting for?

THE FALL: Grotesque (After The Gramme) (Rough Trade)

This was meant to be a bad review. But after getting over the initial disappointment and playing it more, 'Grotesque', the third & a half Fall album, transpires into a worthwhile project as ever.

The main problem was the last Peel session. It was just so good, that the LP pales in comparison. The two tracks on both (New Face In Hell and The Container Drivers) are undoubtedly worse on the LP (why? mainly sound quality, and The Falls always trying to be too straightforward on record) and the other 2 on the session, Jaw Bone & The Air Rifle and New Puritan, should definitely have taken the place of a couple of tracks on the LP. Really, Rough Trade should release the Peel session as a 10" EP - it would be, quite simply, the definitive Fall artefact. (It is anyway).

Yet once you stop the comparisons and judge Grotesque on its own, it stands head and shoulders above the drivel called music we're subjected to nowadays. For all its faults, Grotesque is something different and something vital. The best songs are on side 1 - 'Pay Your Rates' is a very weak start, but 'English Scheme' is the Fall at their poppy best, as good if not better than Your Heart Out. New Face & Container Drivers are, as said, weaker than the session, but great tracks anyway; while 'Cash'n'Carry/Stop Mithering' is the new Fall epic, a 7-8 minute crap rip that really works (although it slags off all of us in some way or another - no one is innocent, remember).

It's a pity there has to be a side 2. 'Impression Of J. Temperance' & 'In The Park' are standard, average Fall (not that The Fall are average); WMC Blob 59 is just plain pathetic (private jokes should remain private); 'Gramme Friday' could probably sound better if The Fall wanted it to; and 'The North Will Rise Again', a 9-minute finale covers Mark E's fascination with Roman Totale XVII and his son Joe. It's an excellent song that goes on 5 minutes too long.

To me, the first Fall album was the best, and I think it's because since then, their 'raw emotion' has meant not bothering about musical repetition enough. But I still reckon they've yet to make their best album, or is it just that the Fall are such heavy listening that a whole album is hard to endure? Who cares? The Fall have proved enough this year that they're vital, enjoyable, make good singles, are disturbing and dangerous. Who else would play a London headlining gig and out of 15 songs, do only 3 that 90% of the crowd knew. Who else?

VARIOUS ARTISTS: A Sudden Surge Of Sound (VU/Ellie Jay)

Someone tell me, WHAT IS THE POINT? Where is the sense behind putting 15 bands on one LP, made up of 2 well-known bands, & among the others - punks, pathetic pop groups, mods, headbangers, electronics, experimental, and more average bands. Where is the logic? This record has no purpose whatsoever, and because of its massive range of music, has extremely bad tracks ruining good ones.

To deal with the bad: Rye & The Quarter Boys are soul - they obviously believe in their music, but don't fit on this LP (though who does?); The Hawks are a bunch of poppy wankers all twinkling guitars and falsetto vocals - I bet they wish Pauline's Quirks was still going; James Treacy is the man behind this LP - he sings Bowies 'Conversation Piece' so badly as to insult Bowie; Kenny Reid plays Heavy Metal, bad Heavy Metal at that. See the variation already?

Among the good: The Two-Tone Punks play a healthy pop song 'Don't Lecture Me' - I'd like to hear other stuff by them; Tools Down would sound at home on Good Vibrations - it's all been done before, but when it's done well, no complaints; Silent Moves don't look the part, but play an interesting, if not totally effective 'Bad News'; The Mandies are punks, and



ABOVE: THE HAWKS

WOULD YOU BELIEVE
THESE TWO GROUPS
ARE BOTH ON THE
SAME LP?



RIGHT: NERVE GAS

'Alistair Jones' is the average man being given a bollocking - a bit of life at least; Nerve Gas are even more hard core, even younger punks. 'Ulster Tour' includes acoustic guitar, & in the one song on this LP with real commitment. They get so carried away at the end that they fall each other, but at least they've got character; The Business play hard & fast rock'n'roll - 'Out In The Cold' is the best of the normal songs on the LP. It was also the business who got in touch with this.

The average is made up by Past Caring and Nasty Habits (Stone Planes, business & Tools Down are also 'normal' bands, but they do it better), & None Attack who try to be clever & it doesn't quite work. On yeah, there's 'Left For Dead' by the UK Subs and 'Quality Wax Crayon OK' by Essential Logic - perfectly good tracks, but perfectly little point.

There's enough good tracks to make this a worthwhile LP, but enough bad and average ones, & so little direction as to make it a totally worthless effort, a relic of varying groups picked at random. Who the hell's going to buy it?

DAMNED: The Black Album (Chiswick)

The Fourth Damned album, a double, sees the boys suddenly deciding they'd like to go down in history as musicians and not just clowns, and finds them caught between old- and new-style Damned. It comes down to the line 'The Damned being serious? Funniest thing I've heard!'

Sides 1&2 are really the new album, and have the deadly demons regularly trying out psychedelic numbers while alternately throwing in old-style Damned to keep people happy. Among the latter, 'Wait For The Blackout' starts the LP in splendid form, being undoubtedly the best track on it. Beatles guitar & Christmas style middle. 'Silly Kids Games' has the Captain demanding his fortune on acoustic guitar, backed by Beach Boy style harmonies & another excellent middle, while 'Drinking About My Baby' is also a good pop-style Damned standard. 'Hit or Miss' is a bit more average, but fast enough to enjoy. But on side 2 the only song to approach the old sound is 'Sick Of This And That', with some really poppy vocals. No complaints among this lot anyway.



The more adventurous material is introduced by 'Lively Arts', the 2nd track, and psychedelic isn't in it. Choral vocals, synthesizer, more Beatles guitar and some good old thrashing in the verses. Excellent. 'Twisted Nerve' is more experimental, it tries to be slow and haunting & works to a small extent. 'Dr. Jeckyll & Mr. Hyde' is again slow & psychedelic complete with horns, but more effective. 'History Of The World Pt. 1' like the rest of the album, improves with each listening. The last 2 tracks on side 2 are the most experimental - '13th Floor Vendetta' sounds like Alice Cooper, but doesn't come over too well, & 'Therapy' is a minutes long, starting with a piano solo before disappearing into pointless HM, the love song bass line, a couple of minutes of riotous Damned, and a long stereo-effects feedback ending. A bad song all round.

The third side you've probably heard about. 'Curtain Call' is a 14-minute indulgence in the art of going onstage. It's very disheartening to see the Damned of all groups sink to this - we learnt before these tracks don't wash, and there's not even any good tunes or ideas on it.

Side 4 is the live side - a farewell to the Damned we knew? Though a good quality live Damned is something special, this is weakened by 6 of the 7 songs being off Machine Gun etiquette, which most buyers of this will already have - why no Near Neat Neat, Burglar or any other old stuff? New Rose is the 100 mph exception. It's also weakened by not showing the band in action as they tend to be live - it's not a sight easily forgotten, but on this side, the character doesn't come through, though the atmosphere does.

The Black Album is worth having - though there are bad tracks, there are also more good ones than on one normal album so the £5 retail price makes sense. Really this LP sees the Damned changing - the next one will have seen the change, and that will be more interesting. And probably more disappointing.

Dead Kennedys

Fresh fruit for Rotting Vegetables?

We all know the story: Towards the end of 1979, out of San Francisco of all places, came a record called California Uber Alles by the Dead Kennedys. It was the first evidence of punk from the laid-back West Coast, and was such a good single nobody could ignore it. And nobody who was anybody did. The record, on Fast, sold thousands of copies, and was followed up in the middle of 1980 by Holiday In Cambodia, an equally disturbing and equally successful single. The band had now been officially signed to Cherry Red, and in the early Autumn, the Dead Kennedys were unleashed on a hungry public with an album, titled Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables, and a tour of Britain, followed by one of Europe. In this country at least, the group became the new Messiahs of punk, and the album, despite terrible reviews, entered the BRMB Top 30, while a version of Kill The Poor was released as their third single, and made the BBC Top 50. All 3 singles are now permanently lodged in the Alternative charts Top 10.

The Dead Kennedys caused such an impact through being the American equivalent of the Sex Pistols: Lead singer Jello Biafra stood as mayor of San Francisco and came 4th out of 10, polling 6,500 votes. Reports filtered through of all their gigs bringing strong reactions - usually havoc and subsequent banning. Their songs were loud, fast, threatening and given a unique dimension by Jello's voice. Three-four years after the Ramones and Patti Smith 'invented' punk in America, the Dead Kennedys were acting it. They were America's most vital band for a decade.

My own high regard was seriously damaged by the album. The main fault seemed to be that they just didn't have enough songs to match the singles, but as the version of California on it demonstrated, this may have been because it was all taken so fast. Songs were recorded at breakneck speed, and the above mentioned track was an example of a song so fast it lost the character it had when first released. A few tracks - Kill The Poor, Let's Lynch The Landlord, Your Emotions, Holiday In Cambodia & Viva Las Vegas - were magnificent, but only added up to 12 minutes good music on what was already a short LP. I didn't hold this too much against the group, and lived in hope of the tour.

And basically, I wasn't disappointed. Their Music Machine appearance was an excellent gig, even if it did end in the NME's idea of a full-scale riot. The songs were all well-played, all exciting and a couple of new songs promised a lot. Jello was an excellent front man, showing that if you look hard enough, you can find a decent Yank. But there lies the deep worry - and I'm not the only person to be plagued by this fear - are the Dead Kennedys achieving anything by concentrating on Britain? Surely a band as exciting as them should be forcing America to wake up in the way the Pistols & others did to England - and if the DK's succeeded they'd be worth more than all the English bands of '76-'77 put together, when you consider America's backwardness. Their songs are about American attitudes, so why do the easy thing and become England's heroes? This isn't an indictment, just a nagging fear.

This introduction has been written, for the first time evr, before doing the interview. I've put down all the above before meeting Jello (having returned from their European tour), so that the encounter will be able to establish exactly what the Dead Kennedys are, and so that, for once, you can read the interview from the interviewer's viewpoint. Enough of this and on to the interview (done the day after the Carter-Reagan debate was shown on TV, and with Ray, guitarist, also present)....

*America where it's urgent
needed instead of peddling it
second-hand in England
where it's the very last thing
we need?*

*Dead Kennedys coming to
Europe and England is the
silliest, most wretchedly
useless conceit I've heard all
year. Why aren't they
pushing Fresh Fruit in*



or: BRINGING COALS TO NEWCASTLE?

WERE YOU PLEASED WITH THE LP?

J: Overall, there was one big problem in that the tapes sounded fine, but the mastering was done wrong, so there's very little bottom end - the bass guitar might as well not have been recorded. So the day we got here we got George Peckham to remix it, so that newer copies will sound right. They'll also sound slightly slower because we discovered the tape machine at the studio we recorded at was something like 15/100ths of a second too fast, so on the album my voice comes out a bit too chipmunk-like. So we slowed it down a teeny bit.

I WAS A BIT DISAPPOINTED WITH THE LP. I THOUGHT IT WAS INCREDIBLY FAST, LIKE ON CALIFORNIA UBER ALLES...

J: Yeah, that was a faster version simply because we play it faster now. One of the reasons we chose the particular songs we did is we took a calculated gamble that we'd be allowed to make another album, figuring that we'd record the best of our earlier material for the first album, rather than dropping it so that nobody would ever get to hear it.

ARE YOU GOING TO DO ANOTHER ALBUM WITH CHERRY RED THEN?

J: Er... I dunno if it'll be on Cherry Red or not. We like to do one-offs so as not to get stuck with anybody for too long, and not recognise ourselves.

I'D HAVE THOUGHT AFTER 'CALIFORNIA' HAD SOLD SO WELL, YOU'D HAVE HAD SOME OF THE BIG LABELS AFTER YOU.

J: You've got to remember that even in this country, although America is much worse, the big time record companies don't want anybody unless they think they can manipulate them and control them - they don't want anybody who hints of being too dangerous. I think that's one of the reasons they kept trying to shout us down with 'punk is dead' tirades in the major music weeklies, because they wanted something more sedative and less threatening. To emphasise this what did they try & replace it with? A Heavy Metal revival.

...If and when we do another album it's going to be pretty different from the first - there'll be a little more group-

written material - more in the Holiday In Cambodia vein. Our newer songs... we played 'Halloween' on the tour, & 'Too Drunk Too Fuck' and 'Government Flu' we played sometimes, and also 'Bleed For Me' which is about torture. Oh yeah, 'Dreadlocks Of The Suburbs' - that's a really old song that didn't quite fit on the LP.

I say that my favourite tracks on FFFRV were the group-written ones, and ask hopefully IS THE NEW STUFF LIKE THE GROUP-WRITTEN MATERIAL ON THE LP?

J: It's a bit more intricate, but still maintaining the punk guts - no matter what directions we may take, we will hang on to that... Actually, most of the guitars on the LP were overdubbed, and we got the guy from Van Halen to play under an assumed name - we hired him as a session musician!

WERE YOU SURPRISED AT YOUR SUCCESS OVER HERE?

J: We never really expected that - by American standards we cut a very, very dangerous album - there hasn't been anything like that by an American band released for God-knows-how-many-years. But then we come over here and find that we're labelled a 'commercial band'. That was quite a shock! We generally drew larger crowds than we do in the States - much larger on average.

YEAH - IT WASN'T REALLY THE LP THAT WAS THE SURPRISE, IT WAS CALIFORNIA UBER ALLES THAT SOLD SO WELL...

J: Yeah, it sold triple the number of copies over here as it did there and I was very surprised. We thought it was a good song or else we wouldn't have recorded it, but so few of the bands of our type on the West Coast have made any kind of breakthrough at all over here. We were a fluke over here - it was a complete stroke of luck that Bob Last was able to hear California, and was interested in it, and called us up and said he wanted to put it out in England. It could have been anybody, although we had more motivation than others to keep going; but on the other hand, what else is there to do in California?

THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE MANY BANDS ON THE WEST COAST ANYTHING AS GOOD AS THE DEAD KENNEDYS...

J: On the other hand, have you heard of - The Flippers, The Germs - who made a whole album before splitting - The Deadbeats, The Screamers - who never made an album - DOA and Subhumans from Vancouver?

THE MAIN ARGUMENT AGAINST THE DKS IS ABOUT 'BRINGING COALS TO NEWCASTLES'. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?

J: No.

IT MEANS YOUR BEING A REBELLIOUS PUNK IN ENGLAND IS...

J: Well, punk is where you find it: there's punk bands in Germany, punk bands in Switzerland, punk bands in Japan & even punk bands in Poland. And basically anyone who cries 'punk is dead' or 'punk my ass.'

I'D BETTER TRY AND MAKE THIS CLEARER: PEOPLE ARE SAYING THAT WHAT YOU'RE DOING FOR AMERICA IS GREAT, BUT WHY AREN'T YOU CONCENTRATING ON AMERICA INSTEAD OF BRITAIN, WHERE YOU'RE ALREADY POPULAR.

Ray: The words don't just apply to the USA. Stupidity and apathy happen in every single country. California Uber Alles is not just about Jerry Brown, although he's the man mentioned; it's about fascists, and they're everywhere. J: We've drawn an intelligent sector of the punk audience over here, and that means they know enough to read between the lines of our lyrics and see that a lot of it applies to them in England as well as our own situation. Plus I think it's the first time they've really been exposed to another point of view as what goes on in the States.

WELL, HAS THE LP BEEN RELEASED IN THE STATES?

J: No.

THAT'S ONE OF THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST YOU, THAT YOU'RE HAVING ALL THIS DONE IN ENGLAND, WHEN...

J: What they've got to realise is that most of the American bands that have been able to make LPs at all, have made them for European record companies because people are just more hip over here

Who would lead you Europeans if Russia hit us Americans first?

Sir.—In the United States, we are told, Europeans cry out for strong American leadership. Is this true?

In what arena do you need my country's guidance? Perhaps in economics? It's a civilised system of economics that allows the majority shareholder to lead the parade. True, the chair of leadership is purchased with dollars, not wisdom, but it's a system of order.

In the United States, we are told that our NATO friends in Europe live in absolute fear of the day your Russian neighbour swoops down and carts your children off to forced labour camps. We in America share that fear ourselves. Our best scholars have made it empirically clear that the present Russian Czars are just using "communism" as a cloak for world conquest and domination.

Just look at Afghanistan! And Brezhnev says that

Western Europe is next. You do believe that, don't you? We Americans do. Even though there is no historical precedent for such a Russian move, one should not let history muddy up the waters of clear thought.

The Russians are cowards. I think that's well known. They won't confront us Americans straight on. They will attack you folks in Europe first, just to test our commitment. So I think it's best we stop the Russians on your homeland, lest they get bold and try to attack us directly.

This is why it's so important for you to up your defence spending, cut back on social services and accept our tactical nuclear weapons. If you Europeans don't provide a viable nuclear deterrent, the Russians are not going to bother to blow you up first. They will come straight after us. Then who will lead you?

As leader, we've decided

the whole "order" rests on our mutual ability to contain the Russians. We thought you understood this; but in recent months you have made us very unhappy by doubting our conventional wisdom. Perhaps those rumours about our global weakness have led to your confusion.

But I assure you those are just rumours. I have just come from our major ally in Asia, South Korea. Now, you should remember that we have asked a great deal more of the Koreans than we have asked of you Europeans in the containment of communism.

The Koreans, like you, in recent months became confused. They got selfish and tried to go it alone. They tried to upset the order, and we simply did not permit it. Some distasteful measures had to be taken, but I think we have proven our willingness to spare no moral or financial expense in the

maintenance of our commitment to those of you on the front line against communism.

Rest assured. We would do no less for you than we have for our South Korean friends.

Steven Clark,
(US Peace Corps: South Korea from April, 1978 to June, 1980),
Wisconsin, U.S.

This would be hilarious if it wasn't so sadly true. But what can we do about it? (From the *Guardian* a few months back)

For that kind of thing. As a result there's a huge American cult audience that buy nothing but imported records. And that market is growing to the point where if you put imports alongside domestic releases in the charts, there'd be a substantial number in the Top 100. The Clash sold close to 100,000 copies of their first album out there on import. (!)

...We're punk, but we're totally different from the bands over here, simply because we live so far away, plus there's a little more sense of humour in our words. Despite the serious ideas behind our songs, we aren't afraid to use humour as a weapon.

TOON HUMOUR'S VERY CYNICAL THOUGH.

J: Yeah, well living in America has made us very cynical, and also very distrustful of those around us.

YOU TAKE THE TITLES, LIKE KILL THE POOR AND CALIFORNIA UBER-ALLES, AND IT TAKES A FOOL NOT TO REALISE WHERE YOU STAND.

J: Then I'm surprised how many fools there are in England. You only saw us at the NME, but at the earlier gigs we were greeted with an alarming number of Nazi Hitler salutes, because of Uber-ALLES. I don't think many of them were hard-core Nazis or National Front or anything, they just thought that that's what you were supposed to do to the song. And so, carelessly I told them during the post-briefing (it is 1984) that basically it's an anti-fascist song, all about fascists in power, and that the real Nazis are the Global corporations, oil companies and what-not who screw you up the nose and try and tick you with a boring job, so that you're just another cog in their machine. And that got through to a awful lot of people.

I explain a bit about skins in England being manipulated into Nazis...

J: Yeah, which of course is playing right into the hands of the people who made them so bitter in the first place. The American equivalent, mentality-wise, of the skinheads are Jocks. The jocks don't come from working-class families or anything, they're usually middle- or upper-middle-class suburban whites, who are basically anti everyone who isn't a jock! Beat up black people, beat up punks, beat up lots of things. There was a case in Cheech (or however you spell it), California, where a group of jocks had been out hunting, and didn't find any deer that day, so they drove around the city until they found a black and shot him instead!

DID THEY EAT HIM?

J: No, they just drove off and were caught a while later. They were brought to trial and pleaded guilty to 'un-remediated murder and crime of passion'; they were guilty of first-degree murder but they got done for (a bit blurred here...) the American equivalent of manslaughter, and only got 7 years in jail. And about 95% of American kids are jocks! So you don't have punks vs skins vs mods vs rude boys vs whatever - you have everybody else versus the jocks, because there's so many of them, and they're in all parts of the population. Jocks, after they stop being jocks full-time, get jobs as businessmen, cops, politicians - basically the cut-throat jobs. And so the jock mentality continues that way. The mentality is 'If I don't understand it, I beat it up'!

HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW IN ENGLAND THE PEOPLE AT THE TOP HAVE GOT IT SO THAT ALL THE KIDS ARE FIGHTING EACH OTHER?

J: Yeah, that's really crafty of them isn't it? And maybe they try and pass themselves off as fans of the music, but the music weeklies are very much to blame. There were no punk-ted fights until - I think it was the NME - had 'Punk-Ted Riot' plastered across the front; I was in England when they did that. And

then a while later, instead of punks and skinheads on the same side, it's punks vs. skinheads deliberately trying to defuse certain bands that they'd decided to pick on for one reason or another.

THE NME RECENTLY HAD A BIG 'SHOCK-HORROR' ON VARIOUS 'STARS' BEING ARRESTED...

J: Was that when they wrote about me being arrested, because I never was actually arrested? There were some early delays over my passport, so I was getting it fixed at the passport office, but instead of them taking the usual 1 hr or less, they decided to fuck around for a bit, and took 5 days! "Oh, we're sorry - we'll have it tomorrow. Oh, we're sorry and guess what - lucky you! We're closed all over the weekend." So I had to back on Monday and the result was no Dingwalls gig.

The worst gig in England was Brady's in Liverpool, which not only was 170°, but the guitar amp went out during every song, just great for the continuity of the set! The fans responded by cheerfully clapping 'You're gonna get your fucking heads kicked in!'. Afterwards they seemed to have really liked it. Brady's is so hot that your jeans drip.

Talk moves on to all the clubs forced to close... (eg The Clarendon)...

J: The same sort of thing happens in San Francisco. Basically, if you have a venue and the law wants to get you, they will. Be it they can make up some fire code regulation that they can pull out of a hat, or they'll say "We saw somebody under age drinking a beer, therefore your days are numbered", or they'll say "There's too much noise", or they'll say "There's too many fights outside, that our plain clothes people happened to start, but we won't talk about that". Things like that. There's a constant battle with the police as far as half go in San Francisco - it's worse than Los Angeles.

WHAT DID YOU RECKON (interruption)... OF THE EARLY AMERICAN PUNK BANDS FROM NEW YORK?

J: New York is a very different scene from anywhere in England or the West Coast. On the West coast, the people who go to gigs are fans; the NY scene is dominated by people 30 years old on up, who've been kicking around since the days of the New York Dolls, and have put together one copy band after another, each even worse than the last. That's NY currently - there were some good bands in the beginning! CBGB's helped kick the door open a little in America, though it got slammed shut again. And you don't see any spiked cuts in NY, because they consider that too British. The standard NY punk is about 30 years old, with short black curly hair, a red and white stripy t-shirt, Ramones jeans & tennnis shoes - there's so many of them it's ridiculous. Then there's the disco punks which are starting to spread like the plague, both to Paris & the West Coast - basically it's people who were disco trendies yesterday who get Vidal Sassoon or somebody to get them a perfectly spiked hair cut. They pay like 30 or 40 dollars to look like they cut their hair themselves; and they die their hair and wear spandex pants. You don't see much Spandex in England...

Ray: You see it on TOTP...

J: Right - if the giggle girls who do the clapping and things on TOTP - if they cut their hair and began wearing Spandex pants, they'd be disco punks. Both the NY scene & the Paris scenes are among the worst to play to because they all just stand there and judge you. They're not into listening to you - they're into picking out your faults.

I got used to the English clubs that get really hot, & so if I wasn't dripping with sweat by the first few numbers I figured something was wrong. In Amer-

ica there tends to be air conditioning or in NY they're not giving off any body heat - they're just standing there. We connected with some in NY but basically we had to attack them before they reacted. In Max's Kansas City there's tables & chairs all the way down to the front, and they didn't start to dance until we jumped out in to the crowd, and knocked the tables over, poured their drinks over them, pushed them out of their chairs... And then they started turning round and doing it to the people behind them, and then it began to be a fun gig!

DO YOU WANT TO TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE?

J: As far as exposing the horrors of American life, we despise it as much as you do, therefore we figure it should be exposed and ripped to shreds from the inside. Again, even though we're an American band I don't think it's bringing us to Newcastle. We zero in on American problems rather than English ones. If we began singing about 'this in the UK' and 'this elsewhere', then we'd really be hopping on the bandwagon with no real thought.

Generally, there is a kind of plastic aura which you find in America; partly because the standard of living is a little higher, therefore people figure they should spend more, or at least are TAUGHT TO THINK, that they should spend more money on fancy technological gimmicks, that they don't really need, and that makes it very very plastic, and very, very cold and hollow in a way. Americans have no soul - you'll find Canadians have a little more spunk.

BUT THEY HATE BEING CALLED AMERICANS.

J: Well I couldn't blame them! I don't like being called an American either, but it's something I'm going to have to put up with.

WHAT I FIND SICKENING, ESPECIALLY NOW WITH THE ELECTION ON, IS THE IDEA AMERICA HAS OF BEING 'LEADERS OF THE FREE WORLD', AND OVER HERE WE HARDLY NEED AMERICA AS OUR 'LEADERS'.

J: Define a free world anyway: free to be told by Global Corporations what to buy, and get shut in mental institutions if you don't buy it!

There was an amazing article in an issue of Newsweek. They say 'Why America isn't ready enough for war', building on the war fever thing. 'The navy says "We don't have enough ships", and at the end of the article - 'Well, we may not have that big a navy, but it's still 3 times bigger than the Russian navy', and 'Hey, well gee, the army may be short of so many thousands of machine guns, but hey the Air Force has that many sitting in their warehouses, but they won't give them to the army, because then the munitions manufacturers don't get the profit for making more machine guns'! It's a total con. The world is a total con designed to line the pockets of the people who build the military hardware, and everybody else on both sides loses.

I think a big factor in America's economic decline is that though Germany & Japan were the main losers of World War II, they were still technological societies. They learnt to build things that did more than just one little function, and things that didn't break down in a couple of years, meaning that if they needed to change the model of a car, they could just switch a few parts and change it, rather than building a whole new factory, which is what America is having to do. A friend of mine went to art school in Los Angeles - it was where they taught the bigshot media men, a very important place - and the people in the autodesign school were submitting designs for a very few efficient cars, safe cars, and good-looking cars at the same time. But the people from the car companies were saying "No, no, no, they're nice cars, and we'd love to be able to build them, we realise it would rescue us,

but we don't have the money to change over all the machinery to do it. So you're going to have to keep buying your shitty Chevettes and your shitty Ford Kideos and your shitty Granadas instead! By contrast, the German automobile industry for example, invented a computerised drill press that can be programmed to drill literally hundreds of different kinds of wholes, whereas in America they'd build a hundred giant drills, each to do just one! And that's what slowly dragged America under, that and the 'Me Generation'. Americans are much more German than they are British, in the way they think & behave. You see Germany is a very plastic country too, and the Americans are very rigid and obedient in a way.

Ray: They think they rule.

THAT'S IT...

J: Of course. Reagan's main campaign feature is he's going to make Americans concieced again - he's going to make them wildly proud to be American, and the way he'll do it is push the button for World War III. He's going to abolish the 55mph speed limit and put it back up to 70-75 - they've used it to conserve fuel, but Reagan says 'People should be able to drive their cars as much as they want - we don't have to cut down on oil. We don't have to cut down on anything. We must drain all the world of it's natural resources - who cares if we cave in in 10 years because I'm so fucking old I'll be dead by then!!!

CARTER AND REAGAN BOTH USE THIS THING OF AMERICA'S RESPONSIBILITY AS 'LEADERS OF THE FREE WORLD'....

J: On the other hand, look at it this way: would you like the responsibility of having to lead the so-called 'free world'? Would you like to have to explain why you send all this money and guns to dictators in Chile, and claiming it's to protect the free world? Being leaders of the 'free world' is a pain in the ass!

Ray: But the alternative is Russia.

J: Right - there's no punk rock in Russia. Keep in mind that if Crass were to

TO CALL
release Stations Of The Crass in Russia they'd be rounded up and shot within an hour.

IT'S THE BEST OF A BAD DEAL REALLY, ISN'T IT?

J: Yeah, I can see how you think that in a way, but keep in mind, especially with Carter in office, America's too stupid to be anyone's big brother! It's the kind of big brother where you learned from their mistakes as you moved along behind them! America's set such a horrible example to the world that if the American empire does get completely buried, Americans are going to be the most trod upon people on earth - everyone's going to hate them for the next several hundred years.

or which have not been seen, great interest attached to his presence was since the Second World War." Mr Brezhnev received him for

DID YOU SEE THE CARTER-REAGAN DEBATE ON TV LAST NIGHT?

J: That was last night? Oh shit, I wanted to see that. Who won? Reagan? Yeah, well he's got acting for the camera training. I figure if you have to pick between one or the other, pick Carter, because he's so stupid he can't get his job done. If you've got the choice of two evil men out to fuck up your lives, pick the one who can't get his job done.

I HOPE REAGAN DOESN'T GET IN (some hope it turned out), 'COS HE LOOKS MORE LIKELY TO PRESS THE BUTTON.

J: Oh yeah! Make money for the people who put him in power! War for profit! Russia Incorporated versus the Western World's Global Corporations. Like, I figure that

the reason the Russians invaded Afghanistan, was not because they wanted to take it over, or because it was such an important country, but because in Vietnam America had a whole test ground for their fancy new weapons, and Russia never had that. So, like dropping germ bombs on little villages in Afghanistan, and all kinds of weird mines in the hills, including ones that look like flashlights & pens - they've got pens that if you pick them up, they blow up. Russia are just experimenting on the Afghan people in preparation for bigger things.

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE MIAMI RACE RIOT AND THE NEW MEXICO PRISON RIOT?

J: It was two entirely separate entities because prison mentality & ghetto mentality are both intense, but in very very different ways. The race riots are just another backlash, because there's a gigantic, but unreported, rise in active racism by whites in America. People are starting to fight back in the same way as they did in the '60's against it. The Ku Klux Klan has more than doubled its membership by a long shot, in the last 3 years, & it gets regular media coverage every time it has a rally. Just like the punks vs skins or whatever, it's taken encouragement for the people to go out and join the KKK. And... the Miami race riots were handled by the National Guard the same as in the '60's; that is - surround the rioters in their own neighbourhood before they get to the rich people's neighbourhood, so that while they're still in a rioting mood, they burn their own houses down! That way they're oppressed by their own means for the next 15 years, so the Nat. Guard doesn't even have to bother sticking around. And I think that a lot more tension like that's brewing... Atlanta's going to brew up real soon.

WHO DO YOU THINK WILL BE PRESIDENT?

J: Still hard to say - either way the joke is on the American people, and the people who have to deal with America on a daily basis.

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victory earlier this month.

Ray: There's a lot of stupid people who help them out.

J: Yeah, Nixon had the 'stupid majority' aced in the hole. He called them the 'silent majority' because they were too dumb to say anything, although that's not why he called them that! Americans are trained from day 1 to be stupid - 'Be stupid or be punished'.

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT OUT OF 240,000,000 PEOPLE AMERICA PICKS CARTER & REAGAN TO RUN THE COUNTRY.

J: Well look who runs Russia - they pick a total stooge like Brezhnev. I wonder if he died a few years ago, and they just have a lookalike to stand there and utter a few words every now and then.

THEN AGAIN, HE DOESN'T REALLY RUN RUSSIA, DOES HE?

J: No, not anymore than Carter or Reagan run America.

IS IT LIKE THAT THEN?

J: Well.... corporations, large corporations - they have a very gentleman's agreement.

At this point the tape infuriatingly ran out, but I noted down about the Trilateral Commission, which keeps a low profile, but has on its payroll Kissinger, Bush AND Carter! Also the Bohemian Grove is a vital organisation. pity I couldn't learn more.

Four or five days later, an ex B-movie actor, senile and decaying, was elected President of the USA. Fresh fruit for rotting vegetables indeed - America needs the Dead Kennedys.

Mr Reagan said: "Bill Simon was very definitely a prospect in my mind for a post." He said

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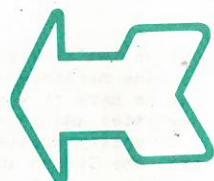
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ANOTHER PRETTY FACE/TV21: Fulham Greyhound

Scotland may not be getting their full quota of tickets for Wembley this year but the invasion was complete at the Greyhound tonight - there weren't many people there, but those that did turn up all seemed to have Scottish accents only slightly more discernable than The Revillos.

Both bands were, of course, from north of the border & first on tonight were TV21. Unfortunately I forgot to note any song titles, a pity 'cos they were a most enjoyable group. A 4-piece playing melodic tunes that weren't actually pop - not an original band, but still different from the mass. They were obviously put off by the hideous white light inserted by our wonderful GLC that goes on in the group's eyes every time the sound approaches a decent volume. Menace said it all in 4 words. Still, it didn't disrupt an excellent group, who have a single out called 'This Is Zero' and if it's on par with them live then it's worth getting.

Another Pretty Face - an impossible band to classify and a difficult band to understand accurately. This probably explains why they've so far been ignored - after all, if you can't put a tag on them, they can't be much good, can they? Tonight was another chance to witness the opposite - APF played sometimes heavy, sometimes restrained, sometimes with a sax, sometimes without, some members of the band wore baggy trousers, others the regulation straight denims. A mixed bag, & the only possible way of describing the music is as 'rock'. Songs included Graduation Day, Born For A Purpose and the best, Heaven Gets Closer Everyday, as well as their 2 singles. The only trouble was the point I've already made - that they were musically & visually caught between being normal and unusual, and it's hard to know where one stands with them.

Since this gig, the band has altered line-up dramatically, with only Mike and John still there. But the third single, Heaven Gets Closer Everyday, has just been released on their own Chicken Jazz label, & it (and Only Heroes Live Forever) is superb. It arrived too late to review, but really is essential listening. APF have some great ideas and music - let's hope it works out.

— AF —
APF as they were: L-R: John Caldwell, Steve McLaughlin, Mike Scott, Willie Kirkwood. Photo: Douglas Robertson

As usual, a distinct lack of gig reviews... A lot of people write in & ask to write for us; the one thing we would like is gig reviews. No promises to print any, but it would be good to have a regular 2-3 pages of short, concise gig write-ups from around the country.

BUZZCOCKS/THE THINGS: Birmingham Odeon

Bearing in mind Buzzcocks' lyrical themes, it was nice to have the evening's entertainment opened with a band my heart could go out to; The Things wear their Manchester roots on the sleeves of their jumpers, taking musical inspiration from Joy Division, Buzzcocks and The Fall's rockabilly tendencies. The singer kept doing little imitation-of-Curtis dances; the guitarist struck embarrassing HM poses but made some interesting noises; and the keyboards player grinned sheepishly and is going to get her picture in "Sounds" if she doesn't change her sartorial style pretty sharply. They were well out of their depth in the soulless Odeon, but I'd be interested to hear them on record.

"AAHH! IS'NT HE

BEAUTIFUL!" That was the girl behind me's first aesthetic pronouncement on Buzzcocks; unfortunately, the contemporary style of Steve Diggle's jacket was not matched by the distressing "these you have loved" cabaret act that followed. "A Different Kind Of Tension" was, to my mind, a neglected classic; apparently, Buzzcocks are happy for it to stay neglected, because that album's material was completely ignored for the purposes of this gig; instead, what did we get? The three singles from the recent series buried under piles of 1977-8 material, that's what; the Anarchy Vicious contingent in Buzzcocks' audience being catered for (they thought) with a set more concerned with Giving Them What They Want than with the sense of adventure and exploration I once detected in the air at this band's gigs. We were spoon-fed half the three-year-old "Another Music" set; "Fast Cars", "I Don't Mind", "Autonomy", all of them fresh gems in their day but stale and lifeless in late 1980. I'm baffled as to what the point was supposed to be; the band, Pete Shelley in particular, gave every impression of being as sick of their old repertoire as I am, and it didn't even succeed as a crowd-pleasing exercise; Buzzcocks' departure from the stage was greeted with one of those painful silences broken only by very lethargic attempts to raise enough enthusiasm for an encore. On record, Buzzcocks are still worthy of anyone's attention; they're still writing songs in which "marry her" rhymes with "Valium"; songs about the sweat and the ache of real-life love, as clearly distinct from the fiction-romance we're all led to believe in. But after this singularly depressing shambles, I should stick to the records if I were you. Unless you really like having your intelligence insulted.

Dave Jennings



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SINGLES

WAH! HEAT: Seven Minutes To Midnight/Don't Step On The Cracks (Inevitable)

This single hardly needs reviewing, as it's been given unanimous acclaim and sold well in return. This is just to confirm that Seven Minutes/Cracks is the most powerfully emotional single I've heard all year. It is loud, fierce, frightening and terrifyingly lethal. Seven Minutes is the thoughts in one's head when you hear the bomb warning - 'You can't justify it, not a word; I don't believe a thing I've heard'. Don't Step On The Cracks is as powerful, with more of a standard riff, but I'm not sure what it concerns. Although Wah! Heat apparently go over the top with their loudness and appear somewhat ~~W.M.~~, this single is vital listening. I hadn't heard Wah! Heat before this, but after a single so devastating, an interview in no. 12 seems more than likely.

ART OBJECTS: Showing Off To Impress The Girls (Heartbeat)

A slow poppy backing with the lyrics being sung by a couple of girls watching the fellas trying to pick them up. Some good words, and an enjoyable song, with a very live feel about it, even if it is short. The b-side, Our Silver Sister, is about the moon, recorded live, and a bit far out, man. Not sure what to make of this bunch, but at the moment they seem worth looking out for.

SOFT TOUCH: It's My Life (NEMS)

Reggae verses and nasty pop chorus - sounds like a white group, which is surprising 'cos the b-side is called The Suss Song, and is solid reggae. No artwork, which is a pity - one of the best things about the new wave is that records are now properly packaged, so it's a shame there isn't a cover giving any information. The Suss Song should have been the a-side, but if it was it wouldn't have got any airplay, would it?

LOUDER ANIMAL GROUP: The Fossil Song; Pip-Pop (Ears-Pop)

An attempt at something different and worthwhile that very nearly works. The Fossil Song is a flexidisc on coloured card, with 2 zeroed colour posters as the sleeve. It's good to see some other ways of packaging records - the problem with this is not enough thought about the project all meaning something; it appears attractive but a bit jumbled. The Fossil Song is 5 minutes long and starts horribly; after a minute it becomes quite Pop Groupish (among other things) and really gets going. Has the words on the flexi as well (or even words!). The price has been brought down to 70p so that they'll sell, and that's not a bad deal. Pip-Pop is the first single - as you might guess it's quite poppy (I hate using that word) and an excellent single, easily memorable. Six Magnificent Cathedrals is not as instant, but still an excellent listen. It's hard to believe this group rose from the ashes of Brighton popsters Nicky & The Dots. If only they could get a label to work for them, they'd soon be as hip as the Scrifts/Pop Group, so how about it someone?

CABARET VOLTAIRE: Seconds Too Late (Rough Trade)

Pretty much what you'd expect from a Cabaret Volatile single - echoed shouting, bass and drums backing tracks, and synthesizer and guitar playing the tune. The Cabs in 7" form are a much more attractive proposition - as usual the words on this are indistinguishable, and it goes on a bit too long as well. Control Addict has the same formula, but is faster & more listenable, a better track all round. The trouble is that the Cabs are becoming predictable, which is where they become a bit pointless, but for their fans, this is another hit.

the naughtiest girl
was a monitor

THE NAUGHTIEST GIRL WAS A MONITOR: All The Naked Heroes (Aardvark)

An electronic single from Sheffield, with a vocalist who sounds like Phil Collins. It's slow but interesting, and the lyrics are good, even if you can't understand them. The b-side is 2 instrumentals - Wax Museum, which sounds like a slowed down Silicon Teens, and West Street, more dreamy. Pretty interesting stuff, though I'm not sure whether it's a bloke or a group. Another independent single released and ignored.

FURNITURE: Shaking Story (The Guy From Paraguay)

And another, I expect. As is hip these days, a distinct lack of image - this comes from Ealing in West London, and is a bit over-rocky for me vocal-wise, but good instrumentally. The group have deliberately avoided publicity and it's hard to decide what to make of them. Not much else to say really, except that with a bit of publicity, this could probably do quite well.



NON + SMEGMA (Mute)

At last something different, man! One side each by Non + Smegma, each electronic weirdos. Non's side is by far the funnier - 2 holes in it (one on centre, one right off), and the first 3 tracks are noises to be played at any speed, on either hole. They all get stuck as well (deliberately) so the noise continues until you move the needle to the next two tracks. The last two tracks are more boring experimental noises. Smegma's side is also 2 boring 33rpm electronic tracks - at least it's got loud guitar though. The whole thing looks great on the off-centre hole - as it says 'Can be remixed at home'. Boy, are some people weird.



THE GIST: This Is Love/Yanks (Rough Trade)

Otherwise known as 'Whatevr Happened To The Young Marble Giants?'. This features said group's 2 male members and a real drummer, with Stuart Moxham handling the vocals. In a way it's good to see the YMG keeping to their promise of not wanting to stay as a fixed unit despite being so hip. The sound is very much what you'd expect on 'This Is Love', but 'Yanks' has acoustic guitar & only the organ is a reminder of the YMG. Both songs are soft & sad - they're not particularly captivating songs to my mind, but my duty's only to describe them isn't it?

DOGMA CATS: Experts; ERSATZ: Smile In Shadow (both on Leisure Sounds)

LEISURE

LEISURE SOUNDS

releases on the Leisure Sounds label from Cambridge. The boring artwork anticipates urban sounds from obscure names, but in fact these 2 singles are both distinctly pleasant. The Dogma Cats' Experts is loud, has sharp guitars and some very silly vocals; the b-side Choke has a strange dance rhythm and is just as instantly weird yet accessible. Ersatz also have that distinctly 'hip' sound about them - Smile In Shadow has running guitar, echoing noises etc - not instantly memorable; House Of Cards in contrast is very pop-based, and should have been the a-side. Teardrop would be proud of them. A couple of very enjoyable singles; keep an ear out for them. The main worry is that both bands sound so unutterably hip - all the right sounds in all the right places. But for now, that's not a fault, it's an asset.

The first 2 vinyl

THIS HEAT: Health And Efficiency 12" (Piano)

Obscure depressing 12" singles aren't my cup of tea. This however (or me side) is magnificent. Some very loud guitars, echoing drums, alien words and shouting above it. This happiness continues for a couple of minutes before an industrial riff takes over for the rest of the song - it's listenable, but just as it gets boring, it gets noisy and attractive again at the end. The whole of side 2 is just tape loops; according to Scott at Rough Trade 'I couldn't make it out, until I got stoned and discovered it was a dancing record! Take his word for it, not mine.'



DAYSHIFT: Living In The UK (Wot)



DAYSHIFT

A DIY effort, by experienced members of Desperate Bikes, Fuck Off Records and Street Level Studios. Living In The UK is a skiffle-type number about the virtues of being on the dole - a good, funny song, although Dan Electro's voice is a bit annoying. Cedric Wazza Superstar is an average bloke who gets sucked into the music biz, Yeah Eh Oh Yeah Oh is pretty riotous. This single's amateur, not particularly good musically and not that different, yet it's a really worthwhile project, 'cos it's got character and a feeling of belief in what they're doing. All DIY singles should be like this.

ESSENTIAL LOGIC: Eugene (Rough Trade)

Typical Logic, and one of their better songs. Like all groups with their own over-distinct sound, it gets a bit boring after a while, unless the sound is one you personally love. 'Tame The Neighbours' is a much better, humorous instrumental, with one of those silly but captivating tunes, worth getting for that alone.



METHODISHCA TUNE: Leisure Time (Eustone)



Methodishca Tune are Stepping Talk renamed, and their 7" single has good and bad points about it. The good is that it sounds like Scritti Politti, the bad is that it sounds JUST like Scritti Politti. Leisure Time is a nice little song, but just sounds so much like the Camden commune combo it's a bit ridiculous. The Three Googs in comparison is more individual (though you can still tell who their best mates are) and mentions DIY Records, which is a strange (& good) thing to sing about. A much better track (never ignore independant b-sides). I've been warned that the next single is 'really amazing', which sounds hopeful, but they'll have to drop the Scrit copying, or else it'll verge on the pointless.

IAN DURY: Sueperman's Big Sister 12" (Stiff)

liking Ian Dury, we now see him trying to avoid the DIY sound, but Sueperman's Big Sister is still much too discoey for me, complete with a massed string orchestra. The 12" is different for the b-side, Fucking Ada, which at first sight seems a bit pathetic, but on closer examination, makes a lot of sense. The verses describe poetically how you feel when you're down, & the amassed chorus of 'Fucking ada' is how you end up saying it. It's got a 5-minute Hey Jude fade-out as well! Not as puerile as you'd think - a good b-side. It seems Stiff either have total winners or total losers these days - they sent us this, and the superb Madness & equally brilliant Jona Lewie singles, but as those two are in the charts there's no point reviewing them. The other 5 they sent were the Son Of Stiff ones which are so pathetic as to be unbelievable, and it would be a waste of print reviewing them - only Ten Pole Tudor had the slightest hint of hope. Apologies to Stiff - don't you release any good singles that don't make the charts?



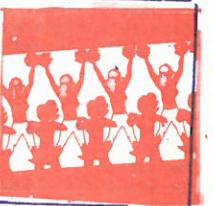
JOSEF K: It's Kinda Funny; ORANGE JUICE: Simply Thrilled Honey (Postcard)

Postcard Rec-

ords of Scotland present... the ultimate in hipness. At first hearing, you're left wondering just what is so special, but after a few more plays the identity shows through. I was going to say individuality, but Josef K. for one are heavily influenced by Joy Division on a slow soulful song with discordant guitars. The b-side Final Request has the typical popular 'in'-voice as used by Copes & Macs, a lot of wobbling & a much faster song. A fair enough single. Orange Juice have pretty much the same characteristics, certainly vocally; however they aim for a more accessible sound & just about achieve it. Breakfast Time is a bit pointless lyrically, & not particularly enjoyable musically until the end. I think these groups really need a bit more time to work themselves out before being overwhelmed with so many accolades that only seem to be harming them.

GIRLS AT OUR BEST!: Politics!/It's Fashion (Rough Trade)

match the first, but it has a bloody good try. The overall sound is much clearer, complete with keyboards; the harmonies are still there on both tracks, and if it hadn't been for "arm Girls, this would have been a knockout blow". As it is, it's still magnificent - it runs along as smooth as a Rolls Royce. Girls At Our Best are one of the most exciting bands to emerge in 1980 - get this single, on pain of torture.



HOT NEWS SCOOP!: DELTA 5, outspoken (in Jamming 10) Rough Trade sympathisers, have quietly left said indie. 'If it became impossible to achieve the things we wanted to, we'd think again' they warned last issue, & apparently that's what's happened. They were worried about getting in a rut, want an aim at the charts, & say the money was taking too long to get through. They're currently looking for a bigger deal, with an advance to get new equipment. NB They left on very friendly terms.

BIRMINGHAM'S BURNING

Burning with what we're not quite sure, but it sounds good anyway. Dave Jennings brings news of what's 'happening' in Brum these days.

Our very worst enemies include apathy, smugness and complacency. Or, it's great to be able to move in circles where things like anti-racism, anti-sexism and non-violence can more or less be taken for granted; but a lot of us miss the atmosphere of urgency that once surrounded short-haired music, and rarely does these days... These were the kind of thoughts that echoed around my tormented psyche as I stood in the Fighting Cocks, at the centre of Birmingham's bohemian quarter, and watched The De-Go-Tees. They produce dancable rhythms (at least they can...) and deliver whimsical lyrics and unusual noises with a general air of extreme self-consciousness. They did nothing to offend me when I saw them; they use violin and sax intelligently, and I dare say they've got one decent independent single in them, probably "Ego Massage Parlour". I pick that number out because, a week or so after the gig, it's the only one of their songs I can remember.

Vision Collision are a different matter entirely; to be precise, they share with The Beat the distinction of being the best blend of rock and reggae I've ever encountered. Their sound ranges from nearly pure JA to a starkly rhythmic rock reminiscent of Devo; but there's far more warmth and concern in their songs than the Akron misanthropes have ever allowed, particularly in songs like "Factory" and "45 Years" ("is a lifetime's work").

If Vision Collision aren't on "Top Of The Pops" before 1982,

We read with interest your page on Brum. Firstly, I would like to point out that the phrase used at the beginning of the article - "We're interested in any news of local scenes, but only if there is a scene and not just nothing" - surely contradicts with your views on Tribalism. A scene is very much a tribal clique. It seems that you take the stance that anything that does not belong to a scene is worthless and irrelevant.

The content of the article said very little about the things that go on in Brum and what it is like to actually live there. It is not London, but a city

then we're being cheated. We are anyway, of course, but still...if you miss this band, it's your loss and nobody's gain.

Local bands attracting interest lately include synthetic angst merchants Duran Duran, whose selection as support on the Hazel O'Connor tour had rather more to do with their manager's cheque book than their music; Dance, who've been getting support slots with the region's big names by rather more honourable means, and whose 60s-based pop-rock has attracted much favourable comment. The Nightingales supplied John Peel with an excellent session recently, and manage to be melodic and harsh at the same time. One to watch out for, as we git rock hacks say.

On paper, Birmingham is superbly served for live music, with a comprehensive range of venues for gigs. We do, undeniably, have an impressive roster of small venues suitable for getting bands off the ground; but once above that level, the practice isn't as encouraging as the theory. The Birmingham Odeon now boasts of being the busiest live music venue in the country; but it has an atmosphere of such lifeless sterility that an increasing number of bands are avoiding it. More worryingly, there's nowhere really satisfactory for acts too big for pubs but too small for cinemas; the Cedar Club looked as though it might fill the gap at one time, but its bar and admission prices are less than generous, and the club has had an annoying run of cancelled gigs. A clue as to the reason for that may, perhaps, be found in the fact that one local band I know were billed as a forthcoming attraction without actually being consulted first...

that has a social and economic background very different to London. Living in Brum is different to living in London and can not be interpreted in the same way. You included the usual unconstructive slagging of Dexys and a lot of obvious hero worship of the Au Pairs. What about some of the other bands in Brum - you claim to be a music-based 'zine, so why the quick skim over of the Brum bands? They get very little press outside of Brum, so what about: Vision Collision, African Star, The Playthings, Denizens? Perhaps a little more research would have uncovered a lot more worth writing about.

You do not say what issue(s) of Smart Verbal you looked at, but Smart Verbal is far from tribal. We print a variety of material about a variety of subjects, not just a documentary of a scene, which most 'zines feel they have to stop at. We are not an alternative music paper, we are an independent publication, to give people a chance to say how they feel about things, music included. But we do not take the view that music is second to God. It is a medium, like any other, to express feelings and ideas. Poetry is also a good medium for people to express how they feel, the structure/grammar being second to the ideas behind the writing.

Zo & Mo, Smart Verbal, Birmingham

the jam affect

SOUND AFFECTS TOUR AND LP REVIEWS

It's true that rock'n'roll's about escapism really, isn't it? If I get fed up with things, or just want to enjoy myself, I'll willingly travel to somewhere like Manchester, going without sleep and shelter for the night in the vain effort of the young to enjoy themselves. Likewise, it's a pleasure to see them in Bracknell, Brighton, Bromley & the Rainbow, 'cos it's the best chance of the year to enjoy myself and escape. But think about it, do you really escape? Music -ally yes, but lyrically The Jam have that nasty habit of singing about the very things that make you want to get out in the first place: the violence of today in A-Bomb or Tube Station, alienation in Strange Town, the whole farce of the 'freedom of youth' in When You're Young, the reality of being a pawn in Little Boy Soldiers or Going Underground, or the outdated class system in Eton Rifles. And that's not even touching on Sound Affects. The Jam don't let you forget your problems, but they let you dance to them (at them).

A run-down of the gigs I saw...: Bromley Tech, a charity warm-up (18/10) - with only 600 people, a very relaxed atmosphere as The new set was played live for the first time. Far from perfect, but great fun; as happened at all the gigs until London, the crowd preferred to stand and listen to the new material rather than trying to dance to it, & at a couple of gigs this lessened the atmosphere. Lots of conversing with the crowd until Weller was told to 'Go home, you fucking wanker'. Paul responded with a threat that shut the bloke up, & it wasn't the only time on the tour he did it; it's easy enough though to try that when 99% of the crowd are on your side - would Paul still say the same things to a person in a crowd 99% against The Jam?

Manchester Apollo (31/10) - The Apollo is even worse than the Rainbow or Hammersmith, but it gave a chance to see The Start, led by Paul Honeyford (author of the Modern World By Numbers) who were good instrumentally, but had no melodies & unfortunately used Rickenbackers; and

the Piranhas. They seemed to be healthily destroying the hit singles myth by coming on, doing 2 minutes of Tom Hark, then stopping & saying they'd sooner do something else. Only when they played it complete later in the set did I realise they were in fact giving the crowd exactly what they wanted, and they did it EVERY night of the tour. A cuddly pop band who make good records, but nothing else. The Jam tried their hardest, but didn't really succeed - not exactly the best I'd seen them.

Brighton Conference Centre (5/11) - Even worse. The soundcheck had the Jam worried, & it was no better for the show. The venue was great, but just as The Jam came on, a massive fight broke out and Paul & Bruce's anger erupted: the 2 delivered an angry but sensible tirade, & it calmed down. There'll be a great gig yet.

Bracknell Sports Centre (7/11) - And this was it. Great venue, being pissed helped the enjoyment, & it was tight and wonderful. As they encored with To Be Someone, the bouncers got heavy with a kid & The Jam stopped, sorted it out, & did another song. Good to see. The second night was better in the group's opinion, but a cold crowd & 'hard' skins (shouting for Tube Station - what else?) lessened it for me. Still magnificent though.

Rainbow (15/11) - The night was opened by The Apocalypse, & I'd be best not commenting on them! The Jam were alright, but Paul had a bad cold, so Man In The Corner Shop was dropped, In The City introduced, & the crowd went crazy. When they were allowed to...

Rainbow (16/11) - which on the second night wasn't much at all. It's a pity bouncers exist, 'cos The Jam played superbly that night, yet it doesn't mean much unless you're in the middle of it. Department S. did the support slot and got no reaction at all, which was a pity look out for the single 'Is Vic There?'.

As for Hammersmith, various cock-ups meant I didn't get in, so it was down to comiserating with Sound Affects; and if you didn't notice the difference on tour, you most certainly know it now.

Sound Affects is arguably the best Jam LP so far, & therefore is arguably the best LP ever so far (to me). Not that will never do better 'cos you're left feeling there's still a few faults that prevent this being the perfect record. You're also left with the feeling 'Is this really The Jam?'. Despite having heard this album countless times in the studio & live, it's still very difficult to put on after Setting Sons and accept that it really is The Jam.

Sound Affects is the best because they've changed when they knew they had to - the old powerhouse Jam may never be forgotten, but the newer direction (I'm trying not to over-emphasise it) is likely to prove just as fruitful - and also because on Setting Sons the Jam seemed to be stuck for ideas after 6 songs, whereas here each song has had plenty of time to be worked out & all tracks sound complete. With one obvious exception - Music For The Last Couple sounds the same as other Jam songs do before the vocals and overdubs are added. It's worth wondering whether the clock ran out on them in the studio & they decided to leave it as it is. No worry, because it comes over as a really effective piece of music, although it is like the rest of the LP - pretty psychedelic.

On almost the numbers the John Lennon influence shows through very

strongly: following the crowd-pleaser Pretty Green is Monday, a beautiful love song in the vein of I Need You. It was definitely originally a Beatles song, as was But I'm Different Now another love number, but a lot harsher - the loudest on the LP in fact.

Set The House Ablaze is a good example of the new Jam (not that they are a completely new group, just a different sound): simple, repetitive guitar/vocals, rhythmic, non-rhyming lyrics, & in this case a loud, vicious attack on the boys with the answers, & other people besides. The vocals are very unfortunately buried on the choruses, but the song builds up to a noisy, echoing finale, fades away and comes back again.

After a revitalised Start!, which suddenly sounds brilliant, is the acoustic That's Entertainment, a haunting tale of everyday life, and a very emotional song. Superb lyrics. Dream Time starts with a minutes barking noises, and then hits old-style Jam, a bit lacking in power in the middle, but still a bit wonderful. In The Corner Shop has become my favourite now, as effective a song as Paul's ever written - 'Says it must be nice to be your own boss really'. Echoing vocals add to it all, but the vocals suddenly disappear at the line 'For God created all men equal', whereas on stage it's brought to the foreground. Whatever, one of the best songs recorded, ever.

Boy About Town is the track everyone's slagging off - admittedly on the LP it sounds too clean & Weller's voice isn't raw enough, but it's still a good pop song, so get the Flexipop version to hear it properly (& for Pop Art Poem, as psychedelic as they come). It does give a chance though to witness amazing production - every single instrument can be heard clearly, every overdub, every part of the drumkit - superb production. Scrapeaway, the closing track, is the same sort of song as Set The House Ablaze

is powerful and sharp. Unfortunately, like other songs on the LP, it's much better live where it builds up to a climax unlike here where it fades away disastrously. A sad end.

So that's it. As said, this is The Jam's best to date, but they'll do better yet. The Jam now have as much power/influence as any group can ever hope for, and it's brilliant that they're using it for music's advantage. So many groups get big & then don't care. The Jam have got big, and now care even more. Thanks.

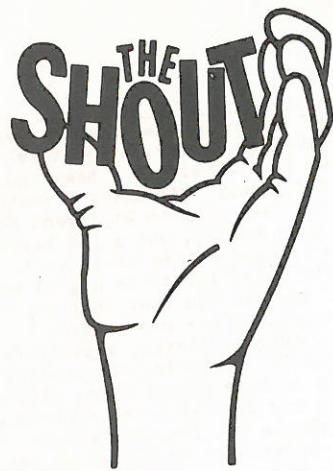
The end? Not quite, you'll be sorry to hear, 'cos there was still the Christmas gigs culminating at the Music Machine on Dec 12th 1980. Quite simply the best gig I've ever been to. The Nips were superb, and apart from the Jam's playing faster & more powerful than even the Marquee gigs, the atmosphere was unbelievably wonderful. None of the TOTP crowd who go to the concert halls, just people out to enjoy themselves. The dancefloor was packed with half-dead bodies but never a touch of aggro. If every gig was like this people would never stay indoors.

After that there's only one more problem with the new Jam album, & that is - why didn't you give John Lennon a songwriting credit, Paul?

YOBOS

by Kev





THE SHOUT



When things go wrong, they go wrong in style. An interview was fixed up with The Shout, who, like Zeitgeist, had been given a brief mention in Jamming 10. At the interview, we all had lots of fun fitting the film into the camera, but eventually it went in, and I got some good photos, and more when they played the Rock Garden. Take the film in to be developed, and find out it didn't go in, and not one photo's come out. That explains the use of originally colour ph-

otos on this page that probably haven't come out well. Anyway, I've got the interview. Or have I? Due to the fact that 3 of the interviews in this issue were done in 4 consecutive days, the tape disappeared in the mess. Completely. Panic-stricken, I handed in the rest of Jamming and arranged another interview with The Shout. As I was leaving to do it, I found the first tape! So we left it at that, only to find the voices are hardly audible on the interview. So if this doesn't seem like a complete feature, you know why.

Anyway, THE SHOUT are from Fulham (well, someone has to be) and are:-

TOMMY MASON - Guitar, lead vocals
LEE HIRONS - Bass, vocals
STEVE HOWETT - Drums

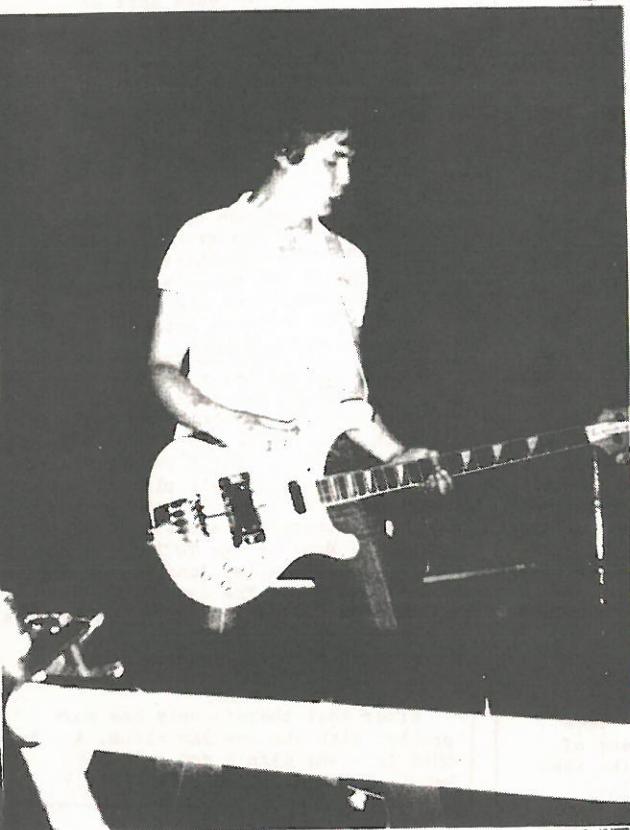
As those of you who read the review of them supporting the Merton Parkas will recall, The Shout are a very noisy pop-ish band. By the stupid definition

of pop, I mean short melodic songs with hooklines and choruses - something accessible and easy to remember. They play with incredible ferocity & sing with high-pitched voices (something wrong with their trousers I would guess!). Since finding out about them, I've realised they're mates of the Directions, & it may start to look like we're putting in a token poppish/moddish band in each issue. That's not the case - it's putting in every band that's worthwhile, as The Shout are.

History time. Lee: "I was down the Trafalgar in Shepherds Bush speaking to John out of the Directions about how my band wasn't really getting anywhere. And Tommy overheard me, came over and said 'Well how about forming a band?'"

Tommy: "We were already mates, but that's how we started up. We only did 2 gigs in 1979, but from February to now it's been one every few days."

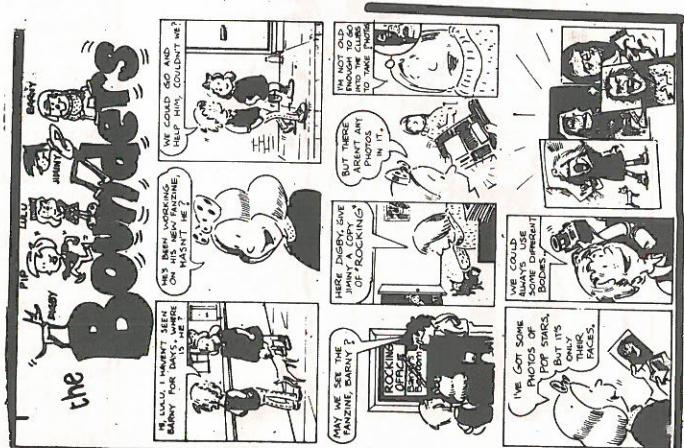
Decked out (usually) in white Fred Perry's and sta-prests, The Shout are likely to be labelled mods, but as they explain, that's the way they've always dressed, the way they've always played, and to jump on a bandwagon a year after it started rolling would be a bit of a non-starter, so any claims to that effect should be ignored. The Shout play music that's always been popular, that isn't adventurous, but when played well, is very exciting.



"A Bruce Foxton pose, my arse" - LEE

CARTOON FUN

This is from an English magazine for foreign school kids. One guess which magazine it's based on...



The Shout got a bit of attention through the Chords also seeing them support the Parkas and offering them the support slot on their tour. The story is that the Shout packed in their jobs for this, that Polydor then put pressure on the Chords to have new singings 'The Gas' support instead, and the Shout were ditched, Lee without a job. Is it true? Tommy: "Yeah, it's all true."

Do you hold that against the Chords?

Lee: "No, against Polydor."

Tommy: "They put pressure on the Chords, so they had to drop us. But even that's fucked up 'cos the Chords say Polydor put pressure on them, but Polydor completely deny that. So we don't even know who it is." A warning for all bands.

The Shout don't take too kindly to comparisons with The Jam, either. It's inevitable that if you're a 3-piece playing '60's-influenced music loud and deadly, you'll get the suggestions. But it's also unfair; the only reason they get these comparisons is 'cos there's only a handful of groups with that line-up & that sound - there's bound to be similarities, but it doesn't mean the Shout aren't themselves, with their own identity.

As for the songs... Tommy: "I try not to get political, like the band I was in before that went about violence & the state of the country, blah-blah. You can say we write pop songs, but ones that you can relate to. Songs that I write now I want people to say 'Oh yeah, that's right' - it's us saying something, but not necessarily political. Something like 'Keeping Up With The Joneses' - it's only a little pop song, but the lyrics mean something."

Keeping Up With The Joneses is typical of their set, from which they've now dropped Frustrated Fashions, their most instant and relevant song. Bring it back lads - a hit like that can't go by the watertide. Other songs include What Must Be, Laughing At The World, John (with a reggae middle), What Have We Done With Our Lives?, and the 2 covers, Twist'n'Shout, and We've Gotta Get Out Of This Place. The set may be loud and fast, but it can go on and just reach the point of losing interest unless there's a really good atmosphere. At the Rock Garden I also noted that people coming in during the last song, Twist'n' Shout, got the impression of a regressive band, rather than what they really are - which is a forward looking one.

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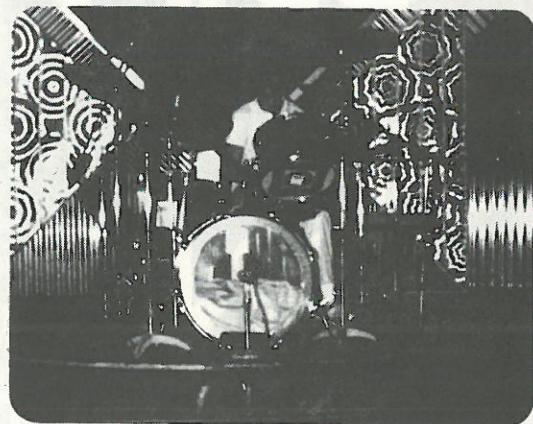
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Tommy: "We just try and write the best songs we can, but so that people will like it and come to us, rather than us writing pop songs for them. We just write the best we can, and I think we've got a good chance of getting somewhere. If we could just get off the ground, get a lot more rehearsals and studio time, & if we can get a record out."

Although they might sound the sort of band to be signed up and exploited, The Shout have got more healthy ideals than that. "We'd like to do a single on our own label, or else sign with a small one. If nothing comes out of what we're doing now (a demo for German label Hansa, & in the studio they lose none of their power at all), then I think we will. I'd love to - it's a good idea". And despite knowing the dangers of easy promises, they're also against the idea of releasing LPs as singles, and playing large seated venues, if they make it, which they will.

Present events, alongside record company interest and regular gigs, include Lees getting married. The Shout have a large following, and having played a disco gig at the Empire Leicester Square with Peter Powell as host, they know for a fact a single would get daytime airplay, and that they've been assured a Peel session the moment they get a deal. (Are these lame big biz promises, or is that the way the Peel show works?) The Shout are sensible enough not to get caught up and good enough to hit big. Don't miss them.





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